

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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THE SECOND MRS. TILLOTSON.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN."

BOOK I.

CHAPTER X. IN THE DRAWING-ROOM.

"AND now, how did they treat you at the White Hart, Tillotson?" Mr. Tilney called out, in a loud voice. "Well, hey? Tell me."

"Oh, excellently," Mr. Tillotson answered, hastily. "They are very civil indeed."

"So they ought to be," said Mr. Tilney. "Do you know, they gave Tillotson the Brown Room. I knew it at once, a finely proportioned thing. It was really a compliment to Tillotson. He gave it to the princess, when she was on her way to the Dook's, near here, to stay for the cattle show. Tell us about it, Tillotson."

A little confused, Mr. Tillotson cleared his voice, and said, "The fact is, I did not use it, after all."

"Not use it!" said Mr. Tilney, laying down his knife and fork. "The princess's! You don't tell me that." Mr. Tilney said this with such genuine wonder and sorrow mixed, that the rest of the company turned to look at Mr. Tillotson.

Confused under this observation, he said, with a half smile, "The room was too large and vaulty, a cavern, in fact, and so cold—"

"My God!" said Mr. Tilney, aghast, "but, you know, Lord Monboddo—And where did they put you?"

"In a smaller and more compact place."

"I think I should have changed too, like Mr. Tillotson," said Mr. Grainger, in a low voice.

"So should I," said Ada Millwood.

"So should I," repeated Ross, scornfully, "if I were afraid of ghosts, or had anything on my conscience."

"Goodness! goodness!" said Mr. Tilney, getting abstracted, "it seems only yesterday when the whole hotel rushed in to see the poor old general. Some of us, not dressed exactly—ahem! as we are now. About two in the morning—I was only a lad, you know. A terrible scene, sir, for one so young. An old man that had served his country, and his grey hairs dabbled in blood."

Miss Millwood turned to Mr. Tillotson, as she saw his hand travel to his forehead in a sort of agony, and also half draw back his chair. Mr.

Grainger, from the opposite side, noticed the same thing with a little surprise.

"Very odd indeed," said one of the officers; "was all this a duel?"

"A duel," said Mr. Tilney, plaintively. "The old general was testy latterly, had the idea that people said he was past his work. Then there was the young wife, you know. Very unpleasant." (And Mr. Tilney's face fell into all sorts of spasms and violent contortions, that meant to convey, that when the ladies were gone, he would enter into satisfactory details.) "Must say I always heard he forced it on Tom Major, made him stand up there and then—viséd him, as the French say—as it might be you, and then—Most unpleasant thing for the hotel, nearly ruined the business—God bless me, Tillotson, anything wrong?"

Miss Millwood and Mr. Grainger had seen the galling suffering on his face; the first, with alarm and deep sympathy; the other, with curiosity, and even amusement. Suddenly, Mr. Tillotson pushed back his chair.

"I have not been well, lately," he said. "A little air will set me right." And he abruptly quitted the room.

"Bless my soul! how very odd," said Mr. Tilney. "A seizure, I dare say. Well, well, we never know! In the midst of life, we are upset like a tree. Brandy?"

"I knew he was afraid of a ghost," said Ross.

"He is one of Mr. Tilney's new friends," said Mrs. Tilney, apologising. "They are always doing something of that sort. A rather eccentric person Mr. Tillotson seems. What would you think, Mr. Grainger?"

"My explanation would be," said Mr. Grainger, looking round warily at every one's face in succession, "that this gentleman has had some unpleasant passage in his life which this indirectly revives. Something of a very painful sort, and—"

The burning indignant look Ada Millwood was darting at him, interrupted him, and he cast his eyes down again.

"That seems a little gratuitous," she said, with a sort of indignation, "or if it be indeed so, he is to be pitied."

"Certainly," said the other, humbly; "no one more so."

"What's that about the fellow having a skull

locked up in his store-room?" said one of the officers, wisely; "every family has, you know."

"An excellent remark, Mr. Still," said Mr. Tilney. "(Wine with you?) Shouldn't be surprised if it was the case of our friend. There he is, walking about."

The company all looked to the window.

"We are making the man into Conrad the Corsair, or Timour the Tartar," said Ross, impatiently. "Let him walk if he likes. I'm sick of these mysteries, and making up mysteries. I suppose he's only a common banking man from London, that gets up and eats his breakfast like others. Yes, yes, Ada Millwood, that frowning and scornful curling of your mouth will give you wrinkles, if you don't mind."

Here Mr. Tillotson entered again.

"Better now?" called Mr. Tilney to him. "Ah!" thought so—quite right."

"I get violent headaches," said Mr. Tillotson, apologetically, "which come on at the most out-of-the-way times, making every one about me uncomfortable."

After that, Mr. Ross became sulky, and scarcely spoke during dinner. Soon Mr. Tillotson's pale face began to warm up. There was an influence in his manner which brought him to the surface of any conversation, just as in society a man is respected. It was no wonder, then, that Still should ask Canby who that "buffer" (or "duffer") was, who kept putting in his oar where he wasn't wanted? To whom Canby, who would have been glad to tell the beer-cart story many times more, said he "was some banking prig or other." When the ladies were gone up, his supremacy was confirmed. Mr. Tilney, a man of the world, had a deep respect for "information." But still the host did not forego his own share.

"Town is the place, after all," he said. "(Help yourself, Canby; wait—finish that)," and diving down, he brought up tenderly a bottle which he uncorked on a slanting stand. "Dear me! I used to dine with a great man, and a good man, no other than H.R.H. the sailor Dook, and I have often and often seen him do the very thing that I'm doing, with his own hands. Did it uncommon well, too. I never saw so fine an eye and steady a hand for decanting. What about the match, Still?" he continued, as the claret made its last Æolian chant as it entered the decanter.

"Day after to-morrow," said Mr. Still, helping himself. "To be on the green."

"Are those Wiltshire fellows any good?"

"They *have* one fellow who can bowl, I believe. But Pitcher's coming to us from the dépôt. Not one of them will stand up a minute before Pitcher."

"I wonder you'd play with such a set," said Ross, with disgust. "They're all cads and counter-jumpers. I suppose you know that? Their captain's a sort of railway fellow, I believe."

"Well, you know," said the major, "we must take what we get. We can't go picking and choosing, you know."

"Oh, just as you like," said Ross, helping himself. "That's your concern, you know. I like playing with gentlemen, just as a matter of taste. You play?" he said to Mr. Tillotson. "No, I suppose not."

"No," said Mr. Tillotson, with excellent good humour. "I have not played for a long time; but I don't think it has interfered with my wrist. I used to play with Lillywhite, and those men." He then told them some details of the inner life of that game which, as in every other craft, are very interesting because informal. Then they went up to the drawing-room.

The girl with the golden hair was, as usual, away from the inhabited district of the drawing-room. Mr. Tillotson saw her several times "motion over" Ensign Ross to her side. But he affected not to see. She came out presently, and went to the window to settle some plants—no one apparently heeding—and then Mr. Tillotson went up to her. She welcomed him with a smile, bright and glowing as her hair.

"You are wonderful," she said. "You are so good tempered. You do not mind his rough speeches. I saw you did not."

"Dear no," said Mr. Tillotson. "What was there in that? I was all the time thinking of what you had said of him. Poor fellow! He has plenty to quarrel with besides me. I know his character at this moment—honest, open, impetuous, but chafing and fretting against the world, which does not understand him—and, perhaps, against fools who would advise him, and who, he sees, will turn out by a sort of accident to be right—and perhaps against strained means, which he sees may be his lot. He suspects or dislikes me."

"Why should he?" said she, warmly.

"I don't know. And yet I seem to understand him. He has been worried and soured by troubles. You know him well, perhaps have his confidence, and might hint to him that when I go back I might help him in some way—(I know some useful people)—at least, as far as a town Manfred," he added, smiling, "or a City Werner can do. This lawsuit, even—"

"Oh, how good! how generous!" she said. "He is a sort of relation of ours, and we are all interested for him, and afraid also. Let me thank you for him. I shall speak to him. I have been thinking of what you said last night," she went on, "and it has given me a sort of strange comfort to think there is some one who has troubles a little like mine. Though indeed it has made me ashamed to think of naming mine beside yours."

"You were not made for troubles, surely," said he, sadly. "You can know nothing of sorrow, and it is too early—"

"Tillotson! Tillotson!" called out Mr. Tilney, "just come here. Come over here! You know I said I would show it to you. Still, look at this. I suppose one of the most curious things you could meet."

Still, however, did not come. Augusta had said to him, "It is only an old letter of papa's."

"Look here, Tillotson. His own writing. It was just when she was born. She was christened Augusta, after one of the princesses. (Helen is Helen Mecklenburga.) And I wrote to H.R.H. the sailor Dook, as they called him, about giving leave for that sort of thing—at least, to know would they object. I was sitting at breakfast one morning; *she*," nodding at Mrs. Tilney, "was not quite strong enough to get down as yet, when *this* came in, just like any other letter in the world. Here it is." And he kept turning a rather yellow and gilt-edged letter tenderly, as if he expected it to fall to pieces. "You see," holding it up to the light, "his handwriting. Read it. You may. No secrets." And Mr. Tillotson read it. The date had been mysteriously removed, or at least some one had made it as uncertain as possible:

"Dear Tilney,—Call your child by any name you like. Hope you are well.

"Yours,

"WILLIAM."

"I am going to Portsmouth to-morrow. Hope Mrs. T. is well over.

"W."

"There!" said Mr. Tilney, in admiration. "A prince of the blood, and just like you or I—or anybody else! There was no more conceit in that man, or consciousness of the exalted position which he filled, than there was in that—that—" said Mr. Tilney, puzzled for an illustration, and seizing on the first that offered, "that paper-cutter. Perhaps not so much."

He felt that this was scarcely a happy illustration. So he took back his letter, and folded it up. "He was always doing nice things of this sort," he continued. "I could tell you a hundred like them. When he went, I can—tell—you—Dick Tilney lost his best friend. Augusta was considered, when a child, very like one of the princesses—odd, wasn't it?—and having the same name. That was *very* curious! They are both remarkable girls; always in spirits. Listen now. And yet, naturally, Augusta is serious—so serious! Look here, Tillotson," he added, confidentially; "puts all that on for society, you know. Much rather be melancholy; that is, when I say melancholy, I mean be with her books. God Almighty in his infinite goodness, bless them both!" he added, with sacerdotal fervour.

"Was Miss Ada christened after one of the princesses?" asked Mr. Tillotson.

"To be sure. I forgot. God bless her too!" said Mr. Tilney, feeling a sort of delicate reproof in this question. "They are *all* good, you know. But Augusta somehow—I can't express it—but you will understand. By the way, you don't mind *him*," nodding at young Ross. "A little rough, you know. Sit down here, Tillotson. I should like to talk to you a little."

Mrs. Tilney, now out of work, and with her head leaning back on the cushion, called softly, "Mr. Tillotson," as if she had some news

to tell him. "Major Canby," she whispered "has brought a new game, which he is going to teach them. 'Cobblers,' I think he calls it."

Augusta now came over with a pack of cards in her hand. Oh, Mr. Tillotson, *you'll* play 'Cobblers,' won't you?"

"No, no," he said, smiling. "I never heard—"

"Oh, Major Canby is to teach us all. He saw it at Hadbury, Sir Thomas Groper's place."

"You know they played it there," said Major Canby, delivering an explanatory lecture, "in a different way. They were all at sea, you know, when I told Lady Groper a few things, and she said it made it quite a new game. And so it is."

"Oh, mamma," said Augusta, reproachfully, "we must play it the way Major Canby said to Lady Groper."

Mr. Tillotson then did not care to play. Miss Ada was not asked (except by the gentlemen, and with some anxiety), and the friend of the late duke was asleep on his sofa, with a fallen jaw, and a lank ghastly look, that once more betrayed his age. Mr. Ross had gone away in disgust to that "vile pipe," as Mrs. Tilney said. Major Canby then began his lecture, and never was lecturer so applauded. But he had one "sad" pupil, who could understand and see nothing unless by practical personal illustration, the cards requiring to be shifted and taken out of her hands by the lecturer, the laws of this game pressing so cruelly on a tender and pretty intellect.

Finally, brown sherry came in, and Mr. Tilney, who seemed to detect its presence by instinct, as camels know when they are near water, woke up, and drew up his jaw. He then "tried" it—to see that it was of the sort he wished to put down before his guests.

"Try this," his voice was heard ringing plaintively. "Try this, Still. Help yourself to some of the old tap. Dear, dear. I could tell you about the man from whose cellar I got this. Such a story—story after story."

Mrs. Tilney interposed. Major Canby was saying farewell.

"You'll keep a place for us, Major Canby—a good place—at the cricket," said Augusta. "I am dying to see cricket—*real* cricket, you know. And, mamma, won't you ask Mr. Tillotson?" she added, conscience telling her that there were some arrears here to be made up.

"Nonsense," said Mr. Tilney. "To-morrow, business—eh, Mr. Tillotson? We cannot have that. All play and no work makes Jack, you know. No, no," he added, with solemnity, "pleasure first, *then* business, as much as you like."

Not caring to set right this remarkable inversion, Mr. Tillotson excused himself from the cricket, and said, "Good night all." With the departing military gentlemen, "the girls" and Mr. Tilney were in a sort of riot of voices and laughing at the humour of the facetious Canby. The air was filled with female voices; they "died"

over and over again. There was such "convulsions," "Oh, mamas!" "For shames!" and a hundred such protests, as it were, half entreaties, half commands, that Major Canby would be merciful, and not go further.

In such a tumult Mr. Tillotson's farewell was not likely to be noticed. Mr. Tilney, in a sorrowful way, was engaged with brown sherry. The golden-haired girl, sad and pensive, was standing at the fire, her face looking down at the grate, her foot on the fender, her dress not a dress, but a robe. She looked like one of Ary Scheffer's figures.

"Good night," said Mr. Tillotson to her.

She looked up at him with a trustful gratitude. "I heard you say that you would not go to the cricket to-morrow, and there was that dreadful word, business!"

"Business is Life, I begin to believe," he said, smiling.

She shook her head. "That is what I thought," she said. "This is the dreadful creed of those who live up in town. But you will go to-morrow, will you not? You must at least, while you are here, divert your mind with the free air, and the open country, and this amusement, such as it is. Promise me?"

Mr. Tilney came out with his friend to the gate. The stars were out, the night was tranquil, the great cathedral was sleeping in moonlight.

"After all," Mr. Tilney said, pressing his friend's hand, "*this* is the sort of thing. *After all*, we come back to *this* at the end—like the dove. I'll walk a bit of the way with you. Dear me, this is the way life goes on, one day after the other, one night after another, until the hearse comes, sir, and takes us away. It'll be the same for you, you know, Tillotson, as for me."

"Yes, indeed," said the other, absently. "And the sooner, perhaps the best for us all. Does Miss Millwood," he added, a little abruptly, "does she stay with you all the year, or has she a home of her own?"

"Ada, you mean," said Mr. Tilney, stopping in the road. "No, sir. There," and he pointed back with his stick, "that little abode—the Roost, as I may call it, is hers—always will be hers, while there is a stick of furniture together, or a crust, or a scrap of meat, or—or, the cruet on the sideboard."

"I see," said Mr. Tillotson, "as the child of a dear friend—"

"Harry Millwood was, I may say, next door but one to a relation. Sir, I knew every corner and cranny of that man as well as I do you—I mean, as I do my own grandfather, or did—I mean. Living in the palace in that way—he was equerry, you know—they never *would* do anything for him; and yet, upon my soul, I couldn't blame 'em. He broke down, sir—he had to break down—give the thing up—with a wife and child on him. Had to—to cut. Cut, sir, under an assumed name, the which rather, you know, gave me a little turn. Come weal, come woe, I like

a fellow to stand by the name he took before God, in his baptism."

"Well," said Mr. Tillotson, eagerly, "so they had to go away?"

"Well," said Mr. Tilney, "he died. Died," added he, mysteriously looking round, "abroad, in a very odd way. I am not at liberty to mention the circumstances, Tillotson; I am not, indeed. And it seems you're making a thing out of nothing. But I cannot, indeed. But it was a sudden, and a violent, and a dreadful end."

Mr. Tillotson stopped this time. They were at the old grey gateway which is the entrance to the Close, dappled over with other greys, and casting a grotesque shadow on the ground about them. But the moonlight played about their two faces, and Mr. Tillotson's face seemed the palest of the two.

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Tilney. "It was as tragic a business—as heart-breaking a thing as you'd see—as you'd see at Drury Lane. I went over to them—I was abroad at the time, but I went over to 'em. Such a state of things! My God! That child in a fever——"

"Miss Ada?"

"In a small lodging. She had been ill for a long time, and was actually unconscious when the business happened. But such a mixture—police, doctors, misery, shrieking, wife mad—my dear boy, mad as any hatter that ever was born."

Mr. Tillotson shuddered. "What a world it is," he said, in a low voice, "and what miserable, guilty creatures we all are."

"We all are," repeated Mr. Tilney, as if he was in the cathedral, and leading off the chanting. "Every one of us, Tillotson, prince and peasant. The only thing is, I believe, to hold fast by *that*." And he pointed back over his shoulder to the cathedral, now a good way out of sight. "Ah! all I went through in those days! But the curious thing is, my dear Tillotson, the girl knows nothing of this. Not a word—not a breath, mind."

"What?" said Mr. Tillotson, starting, "nothing about the manner of her father's death?"

"Nothing; she thinks to this hour, at this very moment, that he was carried off by an ague of the country. She herself recovered her senses in about a week after all was happily got over—funeral and all that—and we never told her. What was the use, you know? And it stays that way to this day. Indeed, now that I think of it, her poor mother bound me upon a Testament, or something of that kind; so of course, as one man of honour with another—you will understand, not a word—not a breath."

"And what a strange story!" said Mr. Tillotson, more to himself than to his friend. "I seemed to read something of the kind in her soft gentle face, a kind of sad, subdued melancholy."

"Pon my word, yes; and I recollect Tom Harrison—a man of the very best style and connexions, you know—making precisely the same remark. 'She's a quiet, nunnish look,' says Tom, who, between you and me, knew pretty well about that sort of thing. Well, here we

part, I suppose; you to the right hand, and I to the left. You know there must come one dread day when we must file away right and left. And what our only foundation is, you and I know. Good night, God bless you! God bless you, Tillotson! To-morrow at twelve, then—or was it nine? Good night!"

And after Mr. Tillotson was gone he remained a long time at the garden gate, pensively looking up at what he called "the wonderful works of the Creator." Mr. Tillotson went home as pensively, thinking, perhaps, of one other work to him almost as wonderful.

CHAPTER XI. THE CRICKET

WHEN Mr. Tillotson got back to his White Hart, he found by significant sounds that a party of gentlemen were enjoying themselves, and that these were the champions of the North Wiltshire Club, who were about celebrating an anticipated victory. Their captain, Pitcher, of whom one of the military gentlemen had already spoken in terms of praise, was in the chair. They kept up their carousal very late, and prevented many worthy guests from sleeping. But these revels did not interfere with whatever waking dreams were floating through Mr. Tillotson's brain. He was travelling back to that small house on the common, which was so filled with its half a dozen tenants, and yet where there was one that lived all but solitary—more lonely even than if she were living by herself in a great dismal shut-up castle. For this miserable abandonment in a crowd, for this desolation among many faces, he had the deepest compassion and tenderness. It came home to himself, and perhaps he was thinking of that compassion, almost as tender and pitying as his own, which he had seen in the soft Scheffer face. The anxieties of the bank were far away, or at least softened into the distance.

The next morning, Mr. Tillotson went to business, and to practical business. Before noon he had found an excellent site for the future bank—before noon, too, he had discovered a quiet, sensible man of business, with good local knowledge; and though Mr. Tilney had recommended another, with infinitely higher qualifications, he did not select him. He had found out, too, the general resources of the place, weighed its chances of going back or getting forward—the last the most promising. There was a new railway promised, a new market talked of; in short, it was the soil for a great financial oak to strike root in and flourish.

The same useful authority gave him some useful hints as to the choice of local directors, who were to sit, as it were, on the branches of the great oak, and have an acorn or so for their own private use. There was young Welbeck, Lord Holyoake's son, a local hunting lord, who was agricultural, and interested in the Condition of the Poor and the Labouring Man's Dwellings, and who moved in a sanitary cloud. The Hon. Welbeck, who had nothing to do, and coming of

such a stock, would do well for a chairman. The intelligent solicitor told him a good deal about Mr. Tilney, whose name, after a good deal of consideration, he was inclined to believe, would not add strength to the direction. He was a little embarrassed at discovering this, for he had an uneasy instinct that his friend expected some such proof of confidence in him.

"A little too much sherry, you see," said the solicitor—"perfectly upright and honourable, but, I should say, could not well depend on himself."

And Mr. Tillotson saw, with some sorrow, that it could not be done. For, through all that mixture of natural religion, the late "Dook," the paternal interest, walking-stick, and brown sherry, Mr. Tillotson saw a kind of good nature, and some feeling, though it was all "humped" and contorted by the constrained false and fashionable postures he had been sitting in for years. He *wished* he could do something for this old soldier of fine life, and wished, as he fancied, sincerely; but perhaps it was for the sake of some one else—from a spirit of pleasant self-delusion, which is common enough.

With this work he filled in the morning. Meanwhile, on a green field, the Prado of the town, a grand festival was being held. The sun was bright, and streamed down on a white tent, and on many bright bonnets, and parasols, and shawls. The Northern Eleven, under the captaincy of the famous Pitcher, were battling with the military eleven. The band was drawn up at one side, playing airs, and over the field were dotted a few white figures in all the dandyism of the game, "encumbered" with spikes in the heels, and mysterious gloves, and greaves like a Roman soldier's, while some stood with their hands on their knees, appearing to be "offering a back" to some one, but in reality only carrying out the true proficient's attitude of the game. According to long-established routine, the game did not seem to advance very fast, for at about intervals of two minutes the whole party seemed about to break up and disperse, the white gentlemen folding their arms and walking leisurely to different parts of the field, crossing each other as if they had had quite enough of the business, and were going home. But in this they only meant to shuffle themselves like cards, and create a sort of variety. Every now and again came a sharp crack when the white man at the wicket struck the ball, which, by an instinct, produced an electric spasm in every other white man far and near, who stooped, and gave fresh and sudden "backs," and swayed to the right and left, and looked along the ground, all expressing vigilance more or less. Sometimes the ball slipped past the white man who was stopping, and who had to go off in pursuit, and then the two batsmen were seen "running" furiously, and the whole company of far-off white men, in a state of agitation, gesticulating, and looking out nervously after their brother who was pursuing the ball.

The girls had not come down as yet, and, in fact, would not arrive until about three. Mr. Tillotson, having done enough work for the day, was thinking doubtfully whether he could, indeed, find in the White Hart sufficient entertainment for what remained, or whether, after all—When he heard a cheerful voice in the passage.

"I've come for you," said Mr. Tilney, cheerfully. "They're all out on the green. But the girls are not gone as yet. I promised to step down for you. For we want to make a party, and come on the ground in grand style."

It was a pity they were so pressed for time, otherwise a few minutes' communion with brown sherry would have come in suitably. As it was, Mr. Tilney was looking round restlessly for something to complete his comfort. But he felt there was really no time.

The White Hart was dismal enough, and Mr. Tillotson, although he made some protest, felt that the change was a relief. Mr. Tilney talked to him, on the way, of his usual topics. One remark he made was, that it was odd, now, that he should find the girls at this place, for they hated showing themselves at public places.

"You know, Tillotson, and you have seen what they like; their tastes are for the little sort of thing we had last night. But their mother and I think it better, you know—"

When they were close to the house, they met a friendly local doctor, whom Mr. Tilney in a moment had by the arm, with some secret of importance.

"Go on, Tillotson," he said. "You know the way. You'll find them in the drawing-room. No ceremony."

Mr. Tillotson walked on. The little green gate was open, and so was the hall door. He walked up pensively, and his footsteps made no noise upon the gravel.

At that moment there was a curious discussion going on inside. The ladies had come from their chamber in bright and new gloves. They might have been going to a wedding. They had found the Cinderella of the house also dressed, not nearly so splendidly, but almost more effectively. That golden hair, which could be seen so far off under the sun, was worth all the lace shawls and finery which decked her sisters and mamma. They were indignant.

"We may as well stay at home," Augusta now said. "I give up. I don't want to be going to these places in a tribe, like a school. I feel quite ashamed."

Ada said softly: "I don't care in the least for it, indeed, only William made such a point of it, and made me promise last night—"

The morning silks rustled and fluttered with indignation.

"What a romance!" said Helen, scornfully. "What a lover to be proud of. I should be ashamed!"

Mrs. Tilney now came in, armed with a sharp parasol all covered with lace. She saw the third

girl dressed, and the smile, which she had put on with her bonnet, dropped down, as a glass drops from a gentleman's eye.

"This ends it," she said. "What is the meaning of this new fit of gaiety? You must stay at home, ma'am, or go by yourself. Though, I suppose," she added impatiently, "we *must* take you, or we shall have some scene with that rude low man before people."

"I know what it is," said Augusta, working her chin at her bonnet-strings as if she were champing her bit. "I know it perfectly well, mamma. She has laid herself out for that old Tillotson that was here last night. I was watching her artful tricks while we were talking to Major Canby—trying him with her melancholy airs and her dismal stories."

Three faces of scorn and indignation were bent on the timid girl, who was colouring in confusion; three parasols were grasped tightly as though they were falchions. Mrs. Tilney rustled violently past a chair and flung her dress back, as if it were in fault.

"I saw her, too, Augusta. But we won't *have* these doings, ma'am, if you please. Just keep in your room," &c. &c.

Mr. Tilney, hurrying from the friendly doctor, met Mr. Tillotson coming to him. "Why, bless me, why didn't you go in? Now this is unfair, standing on ceremony with me! Ah, Tillotson, Tillotson!" And with a gentle force he led him back again.

They met the ladies at the door, who were light-hearted and full of happiness and a childish gaiety and affection. They were the mere innocent butterflies of life, who lived for the hour in eternal sunshine and eternal good humour. This was the idea they presented to the eye of a mortal like Mr. Tillotson. Mrs. Tilney had fitted on her smile again. Three new fresh pale kid gloves were put in his hand, and each glove was accompanied with a dimpling smile.

"Where's Ada?" said Mr. Tilney. "She's coming, I know."

"I don't think she's quite able," said Mrs. Tilney, with some hesitation.

"She's not coming, papa," said Miss Augusta, shortly.

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Tilney; "the air will do her good. There, I see her in the drawing-room with her bonnet on. God bless me! I knew she was coming; I told you so."

Sometimes Mr. Tilney made stupid "bungling" mistakes of this sort, which arose out of a momentary enthusiasm and happiness in the contemplation of the works of his Maker. This feeling often carried him away. Mrs. Tilney walked on without replying, the smile having dropped again. And Augusta, who had all the versatility of a social "Stonewall" Tilney, suddenly changed her "base," and seemed to long for the company of her sister. "I shall run and tell her, Mr. Tillotson," she said, confidentially, "and *make* her come." And thus the golden-haired girl had to come with them.

But there was a great change in Mr. Tillotson. He was in what, with him, approached nearest to spirits. He talked to Miss Augusta with a "light" manner that seemed quite strange in him. His face cleared a little.

They came on the ground together in splendid procession. It was happily chosen as the gayest moment of the day. The white men were still dotted about, with their hands on their knees, and going through their other masonic movements; but no one took much interest in them now. The band was playing a selection from Faust, arranged by H. Hartmann, the courteous and skilful conductor, who, disdaining a uniform, was wearing a broad-brimmed hat and frock, and conducting with wicked and angry glances at his men; and close to the band was the chief attraction. For here were chairs and white parasols, and fresh faces under the parasols, and gallant gentlemen leaning over and talking down to the sitting ladies, without the least sense of being under the sun that was shining, and of the smooth grass under their feet, and of the pleasant breezes, and of the pretty view that was all round. As the little procession, whom we have accompanied part of the way, debouched, gallant gentlemen, with the natural craving for novelty, abandoned the ladies in the chairs, and flocked round the new comers. Among these deserters were Messrs. Still and Canby. This was the moment when an artificial excitement was created by the news that Pitcher was bowling, or going to bowl, and that Daffy was just "going in."

"Wait until you see what Daffy can do," said Mr. Still confidentially to the ladies. "He has the finest hand. He'll show 'em."

Here, too, was young Ross lounging about. It was he who cried "Bravo!" with marked derision when Mr. Daffy was bowled out, and ironically congratulated him. "At any rate," he said, "we could see by the way you held your bat what you *would* have done." He had looked on very sourly as he saw the little procession draw near, and when a young lady asked him who that gentleman was with the Tilneys, he had answered brusquely, "Some fellow that's come down here out of a counting-house, I believe—and don't he look like one? No, I don't mean that. But he is a sort of banking man. You understand. Brass shovel—'How will you have it?' and all that sort of thing."

The young lady laughed. "But he seems pale and gentlemanly—"

He looked at her impatiently. "That's just it. The young men up at Trimmer's shop in the town there, don't *they* seem gentlemanly enough? Everybody is, or ought to look, gentlemanly now-a-days."

To Mr. Tillotson he gave his old scowl and rude rough nod, and a rougher "How d'ye do?" then walked brusquely up to Ada, who kept timidly in the background. He spoke to her in a low voice, which, by his face, seemed to be a harsh one. He had a bat in his hand, with which

he beat the grass as he spoke. Major Canby and his friends were now so amusing that Mr. Tillotson found himself neglected. He was watching, and saw her shrink away, almost in alarm, from his unkind attack. Mr. Tillotson came round a little closer, drawn by some attraction, and then the girl, seeing him a little suddenly, came closer to him, and it had all the look of coming to him for protection. Ensign Ross followed, still swinging his bat. "Would you like to see a heroine," he asked him, "a regular suffering heroine, with a sad face, and suffering persecution? Look here! I hate victims! I have no patience with them. Not treated with respect enough at home—cruel sisters, eh? Life a burden? What has put you out?"

She looked sadly distressed—more vexed than distressed, perhaps—at this public attack. Mr. Tillotson felt the colour coming to his cheeks.

Mr. Ross saw this colour coming and resented it. "Well, what do *you* say? Am I not right? Can't you speak, Mr. Tillotson?"

"Well, I merely say that if you hate, I pity victims, as you call them."

"Oh, indeed!" said the other, with mock respect; "this is getting charming. Something in the champion way. I see! Well, you won't be angry, but I dislike champions also. It's far too melodramatic a business for *me*."

She moved away impatiently. He followed, still with his bat, and with the same sarcastic smile, kept whispering something rapidly. She turned back as quickly, and with a kind of harassed fretfulness, and in a soft imploring voice, said, and her words reached to Mr. Tillotson, "Do, *do* leave me in peace!"

Mr. Tillotson was next her in a moment. "Come round here, Miss Millwood," he said; "you will see the cricket better; round to this side." And he had quickly led her away, leaving Mr. Ross looking after them half astonished, half disgusted.

"That rude unkind man," said Mr. Tillotson, a little excitedly, "how can you bear with him? Forgive me; but I heard what he said, and what you said."

"I suppose he does not mean it," said she, sadly; "the old excuse."

"The charitable excuse, if you will," he answered. "But I have seen many faces, and am obliged to see many; and from what *his* face tells me there can be no such excuse. Dear Miss Ada," he added, with a little fervour, "believe that I know, or can guess, at something of your life, and perhaps something of what you are perhaps forced to suffer here—"

She started.

"And I think it hard—cruel even—that a man should venture to behave as he does. It is unworthy—unmanly."

She only answered, without lifting her eyes from the ground, "You know what I told you yesterday."

"Ah!" he answered, warmly, "but he does *not* mean well! This delicacy and indulgence

may be carried too far. These are the mere perverse and wicked humours of a tyrannical mind. I know human character pretty well. That sensitiveness is all absurd; and, dear Miss Millwood, if you will trust to me, or be advised by one who has a deep interest in you——"

"Oh, you are so good, so kind," she said, with that air of devotion which so often came upon her. "But there are reasons I must not tell you. I must bear and wait a little longer."

Meanwhile, Pitcher had been bowling in most splendid fashion. Soldier after soldier went out with a plunge. The normal attitude of the wicket sticks was that of being awry. Nor did Pitcher content himself with these prodigies. He had other feats; and once so scared a military gentleman by rushing at the ball the latter had just struck, and launching it with sudden violence at the wicket, that he slipped and fell from sheer surprise and nervousness, and was quickly "out." Victory, therefore, declared for Pitcher and the North Wiltshires

CHESTERFIELD JUNIOR.

A SON'S ADVICE TO HIS FATHER.

MY DEAR FATHER. In my last letter I considered why it was that men are compelled to work so hard, and to put so unwholesome a strain on their faculties; and came to the conclusion that it was because of the extraordinary growth of luxury in these days, and the necessity under which men find themselves of "keeping pace" with it. On this subject, respected sir, I have yet something more to say.

What things are necessary now to a start in life, the life being that of what may be called the "upper middle class"? It is needful (and these, be it remarked, are no extreme views) to have such an income as will allow of a good house in a good neighbourhood, a cook, a housemaid, a lady's maid, and a man-servant, as also a brougham to facilitate the making of calls and the keeping of evening engagements. These things provided for the start in life—and it is certain that most young people will have to wait long, and marry warily in order to make such a beginning—the need for increased income goes on yearly increasing in urgency. Children arrive, and nurses and governesses are required, as are also country quarters, where the little ones may breathe fresh air; garments innumerable, in which to clothe them, likewise become necessary. Then come the educational expenses. The boys must be sent to good schools, come of it what may. They must be well dressed and have pocket-money, in order that they may keep pace—for "keeping pace" begins at school—with the other boys. Then they must be sent to college, or otherwise started in life, and still "helped" with money during the long long period which intervenes between the time when the lad leaves school and the man begins to make money; the habits of young men at this time being generally of an expensive sort, as you, my

dear father, are probably aware, and their power of spending money as remarkable as their incapacity for earning the same. Now also the young ladies are beginning to have milliner's bills, and the roomy vehicle in which they are conveyed into society makes it necessary that a pair of horses should be set up.

And how is he, on whom it devolves to find the money for all this, and much more, to be even moderate in his exertions to obtain the means of living? What is left for him but hard, hard labour? How can he pause to consider whether he, already overworked, shall, or shall not, enter upon still new undertakings, which *may* prove profitable? It is impossible for him even to give the thing consideration. He *must* do it. If there be so much as the remotest prospect of emolument to be derived, he must engage in this new enterprise also, though he may be entirely out of his depth already, over head and ears in affairs, and struggling for very life. And this man too, be it observed, is, with all this effort and striving, only "keeping pace" with others.

What a pace! and how many engaged in the "running." Let any one examine those districts of the town which are inhabited by the richer classes of society, and see what conclusions he will arrive at. Let him begin with the older neighbourhoods—Portland-place, Cavendish and Portman squares, and the Wimpole regions—and try to form some estimate of the amount of annual expenditure which each of the houses represents. That done, let him cross the Edgeware-road, and, entering the precincts of Tyburnia, observe the kind of establishments which prevail in that part of the world. Large houses, my dear sir, in the squares of Gloucester and Sussex, in Hyde Park Gardens, and in the regions beyond that. Large houses, whose proprietors have their carriages and horses, their men-servants and their maid-servants, who eat good dinners, and drink expensive wines daily, and entertain each other sumptuously and often. Having exhausted, or partially exhausted, the locality, let our philosopher wend his way to Park-lane, and, after eyeing that imposing row of houses with awe, let him take courage—the inhabitants are humane, and will not hurt him—to enter the precincts of Mayfair, and see how *that* strikes him. Cressus! what a place! What must be the aggregate income of the inhabitants of that plot of ground which is bounded on the north by Oxford-street, on the south by Piccadilly, on the east by Bond-street, and on the west by Park-lane! Our pensive pedestrian does all this region thoroughly. He tries to make a mental calculation as to how much a year each house in Grosvenor-square represents. He trembles, and passes on to Berkeley-square, where the ladies are eating ices in their carriages, wearing a greedy and guilty aspect all the time (beggars looking on and spoiling the fun); and that done, he sneaks along Hill-street (for the aspect of things is chilling his very soul within him), and grovels in Curzon-street, and quails in Piccadilly, and

finally turns aside into the Park to rest. But his labours are not over yet, nor anything like over. One would have thought that the region from which he has just escaped would have been large enough to have held all the millionnaires in London. But there remain the vast domains of Belgravia, Kensington Gore, South Kensington, Palace Gardens, where people buy houses at the rate of ten, fifteen, twenty, thousand pounds apiece, and more.

Nor is even this all. Outside and beyond these districts of extremest luxury and fashion, what numbers of villas are there all round about the outskirts of London, whose inhabitants are people of fortune? In eastern and unfashionable regions, as at Hackney or Clapton, in St. John's Wood, round about Clapham or Wandsworth, and by the banks of the river, how many houses are there which speak in plain and easily understood terms of the wealth of their proprietors! It is bewildering. Who are all these people? Where does all this money come from? How is it done?

Not unfrequently, by means of such extreme exertion, and such excessive straining of the faculties, as I have already spoken of. It is in the desire to live in such splendour and luxury, that men strive to get out of themselves something more than is in them. This desire lies at the root of much of that nervous suffering which is one of the special miseries of the day.

Unquestionably it is the luxury of the day which in a great degree brings all this about. There are other indications of what our present-day life is like, which may be noted by the observant in their rambles about the metropolis. The shops—what sort of tale do they tell? How many of them, in our leading thoroughfares, minister to our wants, and how many to our fancies? The number of luxury-shops in our streets is ever on the increase. In Oxford-street, Regent-street, Bond-street, Piccadilly, St. James's-street, how many of them! How many jewellers, how many scent-shops, how many for the retailing of artificial flowers, furs, and what are called fancy articles, such as highly decorated paper-cases, ink-stands, paper-weights, and the like? Nor must we forget that the windows of many of the shops which sell necessities—the clothes we put on, for instance—are carefully fitted with such articles of wearing apparel as are altogether useless. It is wonderful how all the shops where nothing is sold but what we can perfectly well do without, prosper and flourish. Where do all the people by whom they are supported come from—and the money?

Alas! would it not be better—this is what you say, sir—if we were satisfied with a less number of revolutions of the mental machinery to the minute—satisfied even though the concession should lead to such terrible results as the giving of a dinner without kromeskis, or going out to make merry with our friends in a cab from round the corner?

Ah, my dear father, it is no use asking whether

it would be better or not. The times are altered, and there is no going back possible.

Let us come to a new question, one on which I have often heard you hold forth. Is not life rendered both more difficult and more expensive than it used to be, by reason of the hours we keep? It is more difficult and more expensive to provide two dinners a day, for example, than one. Yet two dinners a day are wanted now. A man who breakfasts at nine, and dines at eight, must have a substantial meal of some kind at half-past one or two o'clock, or else he must fall into a state of extreme exhaustion as the afternoon advances. The biscuit and glass of wine which used to suffice for a luncheon when dinner was eaten at six, or half-past six o'clock, has become altogether inadequate. Yet must that biscuit and glass of wine have been a prodigiously convenient kind of snack. I speak from tradition only, but I see its advantages. It could be consumed parenthetically, if the expression may be allowed. There was no fixed hour when it must be eaten. It was not a sitting down affair, involving preparation and punctuality, tablecloths, and knives and forks, maybe even a pharisaical hand-washing. It was inexpensive, and, finally, its effects were not demoralising. But, *how* demoralising is a substantial luncheon! What an interruption it is—what a break in the day's proceedings!

From such mid-day meal, a man comes back to work in a state the reverse of intellectual. A heavy meal in the middle of the day disposes a human being to trifling, to absence of mind, to sleepiness, and humming. It may be that for the natural man, eating in the early afternoon is good and wholesome. It is perhaps an arrangement which is conducive to the body's health—though even that I doubt—but of this I am sure, that to us, living as we do, not altogether in a state of nature, the practice brings not advantage but the reverse, and that if even it were for the good of the body, the mind would be likely to receive injury, the flesh overwhelming and weighing it down in consequence of dangerous over-pampering at unseemly hours.

Because, then, of its being a great interruption, and because of the unsatisfactory results that follow it, the mid-day meal is very frequently neglected by men who have anything to do in the world. It is a bore, the arrangements connected with it are troublesome and disturbing, and so we let it alone. We fall back, perhaps, on the biscuit and glass of wine, which, though enough under the old régime, are now miserably inefficient; or, perhaps, finding that there is afternoon tea going on when we get home, we desperately drink a cup of that beverage, and more desperately eat a slab of deadly cake. We do so to keep nature from giving in altogether, and a terrible mistake we make. To swallow a cup of tea at a moment of such exhaustion, is to take something that stimulates and does not nourish. It has a raking and a tearing effect upon the stomach. It tightens all our constitutional strings to con-

cert pitch for a brief while, and until an inevitable reaction sets in.

Men suffer more—ininitely more—the doctors say, in consequence of the present late hours, than women do. Not having business to attend to in the afternoon, our ladies can, and it is whispered *do*, make a heavy meal in the middle of the day. The results are not ruinous to their interests. A little trifling, a certain amount of absence of mind, of sleepiness, even of humming, are not fatal in their case as they would be with the lords of the creation. They can partake, then, of the hot joint and other substantial delicacies of the luncheon-table with impunity, and having then to all intents and purposes dined, and having, moreover, in the course of the afternoon, indulged in tea and concomitants, they are in a position to be abstemious at dinner-time, and thus they get on pretty well on the whole, and prosper. Not so their husbands and fathers. These, by the time that dinner is at length on table, are in a condition of such extreme weariness and exhaustion, that they are ready to lay violent hands on every eatable thing that comes in their way. With digestive powers and vitality at a low ebb, they feed largely, perhaps greedily, eat anything and everything that comes to table.

And then, this great meal disposed of, it is not unlikely that a drowsiness, very hard to be resisted, sets in immediately, and our friend on the "road to" digestive "ruin" either goes to bed early—supposing that he can get the chance—with that "rudis indigestaque moles" which he has swallowed lying heavy on his chest; or he tumbles asleep in his chair, and so becomes a diligent cultivator of plethoric disease in all its worst forms.

There is another noteworthy effect of our late hours. Our evenings are so shortened that we do not think it worth while to undertake any evening occupation or engage in any evening amusement. No doubt the theatres suffer by this to a considerable extent, and it is even possible that the general decline in dramatic matters may have been brought about by this among other causes; it being well-nigh impossible to get together an audience of enlightened people, ready to devote a whole evening to the consideration of a carefully elaborated work of art. After a modern dinner it is too late to think of going to the play. It is hardly worth while to take a hand at whist, or to play a game at billiards. Yet these are good things to do; they keep a man awake, they give him occupation, lay hold of his attention, and compel him to think of something which is not really important—all highly desirable objects to accomplish, and especially when bedtime draws near; that season of compelled inaction when the mind should have some unimportant matters to dwell upon, since he who concerns himself at that time with his business, twisting and turning it in busy impotence, wears himself out, mind and body, to no purpose.

So much for the late dinners, regarded from a sanitary point of view. Looking at them in

a pecuniary light, we shall find that they are expensive as well. Except in households where money is no object, the providing of this second dinner daily is a very serious addition to the expenses of housekeeping. The luncheon required in these days, is a formidable meal. It is a first dinner, and requires thought as well as expenditure. It must not clash with the second dinner. The two must be composed, each with an eye to the other. Hard work this for whoever does the housekeeping. Hard work especially, when you have a house full of visitors to provide for.

But there are other things connected with the habits of the time, which probably have even a larger share in generating the functional derangements which are so much complained of just now. Surely it is not too much to say that the two conditions of *hurrying* and *waiting* may have their share in throwing our nervous machinery out of gear.

Consider for a moment the harassment which belongs to railway travelling at home or abroad. To begin with, a punctuality which is a thing of half seconds is indispensable. You cannot hail a train which has just started, as you could a coach. You cannot run after it, or overtake it in a swifter vehicle. A difference in clocks, a block-up in the City, a slippery roadway in winter, a refractory or incompetent cab-horse—and you are lost. You sit on thorns; you refer to your watch incessantly; you compare the public clocks that lie along your line of route; your heart is in your mouth every time that a Pickford or a Chaplain and Horne gets in your way. You are on tenter-hooks, sanguine for a moment, then desperate. You gallop up to the terminus—the doors are just closing—a porter rushes at you, tears you out of your cab, flings himself upon your luggage—what are you to give the driver? no change—you are whirled to the ticket-office, more difficulties about change—you have things to carry, your hands are full—there are whistlings, screamings, bells—where is the luggage? who knows?—a door bangs, and you are off. What sort of work for the nerves is this! And it follows a morning spent in hurrying hither and thither, in order that you may be able to get off on your journey at all.

Or, perhaps, when at last you drive up to those terminus doors, you find that all your hurrying has been in vain, and that they are closed. Behold now you find yourself involved in that other necessity which belongs to our present-day life, the necessity of waiting. Waiting and hurrying go together. You have to wait two hours now for a train. How valuable would an eighth of that time have been a little while since. Now you have nothing to do. You kick your heels, you loiter, you read the backs of the books on the stall, you try to understand the principle of the locomotive, you are unable to do it. You reflect that this spare time would have been invaluable to you at the other end of your journey. You consult and re-consult time-tables, and hold conferences with iron-witted porters. You fret and fume, and make

bad blood. Presently you begin to hurry again. You had originally so much time on your hands that it seemed inexhaustible, and so, having at last managed to occupy yourself, the minutes have slipped away, and you are suddenly aroused to a conviction that it is needful you should bestir yourself, lest you should again be too late. Then the whistling begins again, and all the rest of it.

Hurry and dawdling. Hurry and dawdling. All this is repeated again at that station where there is a junction—a junction where the trains don't fit, and where again you have to go through that performance of killing a couple of hours or so. You thought that (by hurrying) you might have caught the 4.20 train, but you find that this was a mistaken idea, and that it only now remains for you to secure (by dawdling) a place in the 6.15, which brings you to your journey's end at an inconvenient hour, and with vague prospects in the article of dinner. As to the effect upon the nerves of the various panics to which the railway traveller is exposed—when he is in a train which is making up for lost time, when the carriages rock violently, when he finds himself shut up with a gentleman obviously deranged, who talks to himself, or takes medicine out of a bottle, which may contain poison, there is no need to mention these things.

The miseries connected with the termination of your journey are probably not much greater than those which attended a similar arrival in former times. To be cold and sleepy, or hot and swollen, has ever been the lot of the traveller when arriving at his journey's end. True, we have now more anxieties about our luggage, being entirely separated from it en route, and true that we require some means of conveyance from the station at which we arrive, to the hotel or other place of destination. Still, we have not much dawdling nor much hurrying at our journey's end; only a sense of deadly fatigue and an inclination to doubt whether the journey was worth making.

The nerves are a good deal shaken by a day such as this. The nerves are shaken by everything that is in any way connected with a train. Think of Bradshaw. Think of the railway whistle. What a sound it has when you are drawing near a station hoping to catch the train; it goes off with a sudden yell, and your marrow freezes as you think that it is the parting screech, and that the train has left without you. How do we like it again, when in the middle of the country, say at the entrance to a tunnel, and far away from any station, the train begins to slacken its pace, and the whistle is heard sounding inexplicably. Stoppages of this sort are by no means uncommon—inscrutable stoppages which none of the officials can or will explain. After half an hour of whistling, something goes by on the other line, and then you proceed. But meantime you have suffered. The responsive style of whistling again is a bad thing. This commonly takes place at a short distance from a station, and is very trying. You remain outside the station precincts, myste-

riously, and there is an abundance of whistling and counter-whistling—loud and near at first, and then faint and afar off; the two whistles answering each other, as nightingales do: the effect, however, being less harmonious.

In my next letter I propose to allude to a matter, in connexion with which my observations have led me to believe that you specially need guidance. Meantime, I am, as always, your affectionate son,

P. CHESTERFIELD, JUNIOR.

THE ORIGIN OF THE SNOWDROP.

I.

Adown the leaden sky
The drifting snow-flakes fall;
And o'er the ground they lie
A soft and velvet pall.
A symbol of the grief
That shivering Nature feels,
When ice on stem and leaf,
Her every tear congeals:
Yes, on the earth so light
They form a velvet shroud;
And strange that flakes so white
Should come from blackest cloud!
Floating, drifting, soft descending
From their sources up on high;
Falling, floating, never ending,
In the dull and sullen sky.

II.

The languid sun with slanting beam
Illumed a snowdrift fair,
And with his pale and wintry gleam
Formed silver crystals there.
But when the stealthy evening came,
And bathed the western sky
With indigo and lurid flame,
It bade the sunlight die.
Then, like a lovely robe of fur,
The snow lay far and wide;
A robe of whitest miniver
Cast o'er the earth, its bride.
A mantle for the slumbering night,
And though itself so cold,
It warms with its protecting might,
All things within its fold.
It shelters embryo life in seeds
That in the spring shall rise,
In painted flow'rets o'er the meads,
With bright and loving eyes.
Those roots that hide and hibernate
Within their frozen home,
It covers up, and bids them wait
Till summer days shall come.
Floating, drifting, never ending,
In the dark and sullen sky,
Falling, floating, soft descending
On the earth so tranquilly.

III.

Then spoke small voices sweet
From crypt beneath the ground,
Where busy pigmies meet
To babble lore profound.
"Oh, Nature, hear our prayer,
The prayer of sprites who love
The spotless drift so fair,
Born in the heavens above.

We are not elves who dwell
 In perfumed cups of flowers,
 When summer lights the dell
 And gilds the laughing hours.
 We care not for the days,
 That dress in vesture green,
 For we are winter fays
 Who love the frozen scene.
 We live in icy homes
 Where bulbs and fibres grow ;
 Yes, we are winter gnomes,
 The genii of the snow.
 So Nature hear our prayer,
 The prayer of sprites who love
 The spotless drift so fair,
 Born in the heavens above."
 Floating, drifting, never ending,
 In the dark and sullen sky ;
 Falling, floating, soft descending,
 On the earth so tranquilly.

To this replied a voice, in whisper low :
 'Twas like the murmuring where waters flow,
 "Speak, fairies, speak, and mine the task shall be,
 To grant the boon you seek, all willingly."

IV.

"Thanks, Nature, thanks, we ask of thee
 Memento of our darling snow,
 Before that dreadful time shall be—
 And come it must, we know—
 When that the glowing days shall bring
 Vertumnus and the sun,
 To change the drift to gurgling spring,
 And bid its waters run ;
 We ask some token ere the dress
 Belov'd by every fay,
 That cherished us in loneliness,
 Be rudely torn away.
 For we must wait the circling year
 Before it comes again.
 So bounteous Nature hear our prayer,
 And ere the lovely frozen rain
 Shall vanish quite, and winter go,
 Oh leave some record of the snow."
 Floating, drifting, soft descending,
 From its sources up on high ;
 Falling, floating, strangely blending
 With the dull and leaden sky.

They ceased ; then once again there fell
 A voice which like a perfume filled the dell.
 So mystic in its tones, it floated round
 As gently as the snow, in flakes of sound,
 Yet clear as Nature's whispers ever fall
 For those who love her ; clear as madrigal
 From reedy flutes where breezes lightly play,
 And from the pipes evoke strange harmony.
 For those who love her, fragments of a tone,
 Or scent, or sigh, have meaning of their own.
 Thus came, in trembling notes, her answer sweet,
 Which I, in feeblest verse, must fain repeat.

V.

"Oh, fairies of the frozen earth,
 Who know the secrets of my power,
 Who watch, and aid the magic birth
 Of root to tree, of seed to flower,
 I grant thy prayer, and freely give
 A relic of the winter time ;
 Within this very dell shall live
 A lovely child of snow and rime.

Before the sun shall warmer grow,
 And bid the drowsy Undines leap ;
 Before the rivers dancing go,
 That late were frost in tranquil sleep :
 Within this fairy dell shall rise
 A snowdrop from the frozen rain,
 And pale with maidenly surprise
 At gift of life, shall pale remain.
 No colour that can change or fade
 Shall she assume, but like a nun
 With hood of pearly petals made,
 She'll 'scape the rude and garish sun.
 Amidst her maiden leaves so green,
 She'll sit, and bend her head to hear
 The words which call her winter's queen
 From knightly crocus growing near.
 Sir Yellow Crocus, gay and bold,
 Would win her for his lovely bride,
 Dressed in his panoply of gold,
 With spears of sharp leaves by his side.
 But soon the sunny days will shine,
 And ice be changed to rippling water,
 Then make, oh elves, the snowdrop thine,
 And love her as adopted daughter ;
 And wipe the tear-drops from her eyes,
 And tell her this sweet hope is given,
 That though her mother melts and flies
 She'll come again in flakes from Heaven !"
 Floating, drifting, soft descending
 From their sources up on high ;
 And their whiteness strangely blending
 With the dull and leaden sky.

UNDER THE GUNS OF THE MORRO.

THERE used some years ago to be a little
 tobacconist's shop, somewhere between Pall-
 Mall and Duncannon-street, by the sign of the
 Morro Castle. It was such a little shop, and
 it smelt so strongly of cedar and of the Indian
 weed, that itself was not unlike a cigar-box.
 Here I used to think a threepenny cigar about
 the greatest luxury in which a young man of
 pleasure could indulge ; but a luxury only
 to be ventured upon at the occurrence of
 solemn festivals, and when the treasures of
 the mines of Potosi, to the extent of a few
 shillings, lay loose in one's waistcoat-pocket.
 There were threepenny cigars in those days, and
 they were delicious. I am afraid that the
 manufacture has ceased, or that the threepen-
 nies have lost their flavour, for Ensign and
 Lieutenant Dickeystrap, of the Guards, declares
 that you cannot get anything fit to smoke under
 ninepence, and that a really tolerable "weed"
 will stand you in eighteenpence. Prince Fortu-
 natus, they say, gives half-a-crown apiece for his
 Havanas. The Morro Castle, however, did a
 very modest but, I believe, remunerative busi-
 ness at from threepence to sixpence. Well do
 I remember courtly old Mr. Alcachofado, the
 proprietor of the Morro—always in the same
 well-buttoned frock-coat, always with the same
 tall shiny hat with the broad turned-up brim
 —always puffing at, apparently, the same stump
 of a choice Londres. It was well worth while
 laying out threepence at the Morro Castle ; for,
 in consideration of that modest investment, you
 were treated, for at least five minutes, like a

peer of the realm. Mr. Alcachofado himself selected your cigar, and, if you approved of it, snipped off the end in a little patent machine, and presented it to you with a grave bow. You proposed to light it; but this Mr. Alcachofado would by no means permit. He drew a splint from a stack in a japanned stand, kindled it at the gas-jet, and with another bow handed it to you. If you wished to fill the heart of Mr. Alcachofado with anguish, and to pass in his eyes for a person of the very worst breeding, you would, when the splint had served your turn, cast it on the floor, and trample it under foot. I have seen the proprietor of the Morro glare at people who did this, as though he would have dearly liked to take off his curly-brimmed hat and fling it at their heads. Regular customers knew well the etiquette of the Morro, which was gently to blow out the tiny flame of the splint, and place it horizontally on the top of the fascies in the japanned tin box. Then *you* bowed to Mr. Alcachofado, and *he* bowed in return, and, taking a seat, if you liked, on a huge cigar chest, you proceeded to smoke the calumet of peace. Did I say that for five minutes you would be treated like a nobleman? You might softly kick your heels, and meditate on the transitory nature of earthly things, in that snug little shop for nearly half an hour. Threepenny cigars lasted five-and-twenty minutes in those days. Austere personages of aristocratic mien patronised Mr. Alcachofado. They looked like country members, masters in Chancery, charity commissioners. They looked as though they belonged to clubs. They called the proprietor Alcachanything, without the Mr. He was gravely courteous to them, but not more so than to humbler patrons. I remember that he always took in the second edition of the Globe. I have, in my time, bespoken it, I think, not without fear and trembling, from a baronet. They were affable creatures, those exalted ones, and talked sedate common-places about the House, and the crops, and the revenue, until I used to fancy I had land and beeves and a stake in the country. There was only one absolutely haughty customer, who wore a spencer and gaiters, and sometimes swore. He smoked a costlier cigar than the ordinary race of puffers; and one had to rise from the big cigar chest while Mr. Alcachofado, a shining bunch of keys in hand, like a discreet sacristan, unlocked this treasure-coffer, and produced regalias of price. Yet even this haughty man in the spencer gave me a bow once when I brushed by him in the lobby of the House, where I had been waiting two hours and a quarter on a night when Sir Robert Peel was up, in the vain hope of getting into the strangers' gallery with an Irish member's order. The haughty man thought he knew me. I felt so proud that I had my hair cut the very next day, and determined, like Mr. Pepys, to "go more like myself." A grave company we were at Mr. Alcachofado's. Now and then, on Opera nights, dandies in evening dress would stroll in to smoke a cigarette. There was great

scandal one evening—it was Grisi's benefit—when a tall young man, with a white cravat and a tawny moustache, ordered Mr. Alcachofado to "open him a bottle of soda, and look sharp." Those were his very words. There was a commotion among the customers. Soda water! Was this a tobaccoconist's and fancy stationer's in the Clapham-road? As well might you have asked the beadle of St. George's, Hanover-square, for hot whisky-toddy between psalm and sermon. Mr. Alcachofado, under the circumstances, was calm. He gave the tall young desperado one look, to wither him, and in slow and measured accents, not devoid of a touch of sarcasm, replied, "I sell neither soda-water, nor ginger-beer, nor walking-sticks, nor penny valentines, sir." The customers grimly chuckled at this overwhelming rebuke. There was nothing left for the tall young man but to withdraw; but, as I was nearest the door, I am constrained to state that as he lounged out he remarked that the "old guy," meaning Mr. Alcachofado, "seemed doosid crusty."

He is gone, this Grandison of the counter and till—gone, seemingly, with most other professors of the grande manière. The modern tobaccoconist is loud voiced and obtrusive; proposes to send you home a box of the Cabana Kings of which you have scarcely tasted one; and, ere you have been in his shop five minutes, gives you a tip for the Two Thousand Guineas. This was not Mr. Alcachofado's way of doing business. By-the-by, why wasn't he a señor? But he betrayed no symptoms of Iberian extraction; and when, seeing an engraving of the Morro Castle itself on one of his cedar boxes, I strove to draw him out, and asked him if the picture resembled the place itself, he replied, ambiguously, that he had not visited foreign parts—adding, after a moment's pause, that he did not approve of their ways. Whence his Spanish name, then? Whence anybody's name? I dealt with a green-grocer once who had the self-same appellation as the last prime minister of Constantine Palæologus. How Mr. Alcachofado had come to enter the tobacco business—unless he were a retired Custom-house officer—was to me a mystery. There was a dim something about him that always led you to fancy that before he had dealt in cigars, he had been in the church.

The Morro Castle had to me always a fascinating sound. There were three boys at the school at Turnham-green, where I completed my education—that is to say, where on the last day of my last "half" I began to discover that I didn't know anything—three Spanish Creole boys all hailing from Havana. They kept very close together, and aloof from the rest of the school, and wrapped themselves up in Castilian pride as in a cloak; indeed, one of them subsequently admitted to me, that, on leaving Cuba, his papa had given him two special cautions: to beware of the "Estrangeros," and not to show them—"enseñar"—the Spanish tongue. We, too, were rather shy of them at first; for there was a received tradition among

us, that all foreign boys, when moved to anger, stabbed. Very unjustly we christened the youngest Creole, Dagger; his little brother, Bodkin; and the third, who was a tall lean lad with glittering eyes, Carving-knife. I think a good deal of nonsense—as could be proved by the police reports and the Old Bailey sessions papers—has been talked about the “un-English” nature of the crime of stabbing. It is not the custom to carry deadly weapons on the person in England, for the reason that the laws for the protection of life and property are very stringent, and, as a rule, efficiently administered; but I never heard of a drunken savage Englishman who could get hold of a knife in a row, who wouldn’t use it; nor, as regards the softer sex, are the biting off the nose of an adversary, and the searing of her face with a red-hot poker, quite “un-English” or un-Irish practices.

Our schoolmaster, who was an eccentric instructor, half Pestalozzi, and half Philosopher Square, had an idea that all Spanish children were weaned upon tobacco, and absolutely permitted these three Creole lads to smoke: on condition, however, that they should not light up their papillitos until night-time, when the other boys went to bed. How we used to envy them, as, marching in Indian file to our dormitories, we could see those favoured young Dons enrolling their squares of tissue paper, preparatory to a descent into the playground, and a quiet smoke! The demoralisation among the juvenile community, caused by this concession to Spanish customs, was but slight. One or two of us tried surreptitious weeds on half-holiday afternoons; but the Widow Jones in Chiswick-lane did not keep quite such choice brands in stock as did Mr. Alcachofado of the Morro Castle; and Nemesis, in the shape of intolerable nausea, very soon overtook us. It is astounding, at fourteen years of age, how much agony of heart, brain, and stomach, can be got out of one penny Pickwick. Pestalozzi Square, Ph. Dr., very wisely refrained from excessive severity on this head. He made it publicly known that a boy detected in smoking, would not necessarily be caned, but that on three alternate days for a week following the discovery of his offence, he would be supplied at one P.M. with a clean tobacco-pipe, and half an ounce of prime shag in lieu of dinner. We had very few unlicensed smokers after this announcement.

It was my singular good fortune, ere I left the tutelage of the sage of Turnham-green, to be admitted to the acquaintance, and almost to the intimacy, of the three Creoles. I had somewhat of a Spanish sounding name and lineage, and they deemed me not wholly to belong to the “Estrangeros;” at all events, they talked to me, and told me as much as I hungered and thirsted to know about the Morro Castle. For, long before I began to deal with Mr. Alcachofado, I had pondered over a picture of this fortress, and mused as to what its real aspect might be. So, softly and gratefully as dried mint falls upon pea-soup, did the tales of these Spanish boys about the rich strange island of Cuba fall upon my

willing ear. I saw it in its golden prime, all sugar and spice, and redolent of coffee-berries and the most fragrant of cigars. I basked in the rich full light of the tropical sun. I saw the caballero gravely pacing on his Andalusian jennet; the lazy negro, pausing as he cut the sugar-cane to suck the luscious tubes; the señora in her mantilla; the seofrita with her fan. I revelled in a voluptuous dream of the torrid clime, where you ate fifteen oranges before breakfast, and a plateful of preserved cocoa-nut at breakfast; where you never failed to take a siesta in your hammock during the noontide heats; where full evening costume consisted of a suit of white linen, a Panama hat, and a guitar; and where, with any little circumspection, you might win the hundred thousand dollar prize in the lottery. I longed to go to Havana, or the Havannah as it was known in our time. Who has not so longed to visit strange countries when he was young, and imaginative, and had no money? Byron’s words used to drive us crazy to see Sestos, and Abydos, and Athens. Anastasius, or the Memoirs of a Greek—why does not some one republish that pearl of picaresque romance?—made us tremble with eagerness to see the Fanat of Constantinople and the Bagnio of Smyrna; and, later in the day, Eothen set us wild to catch a gazelle, and bathe in the Dead Sea, and read the Quarterly Review in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. I cannot say the same for Gil Blas. Unsurpassed as Le Sage’s great work is, as a feat of story-telling, it is to me singularly deficient in local colour. The Robbers’ Cave might be in Italy or in England in the days of Robin Hood. The Archbishop of Granada might be resident at Barchester Towers. I know Doctor Sangrado. He lives in Bloomsbury. Now Don Quixote, on the contrary, ola su ajo, is odorous of the real Spanish Gaelic from the first to the last page. But Don Quixote is not a boys’ book, whatever you may say. It is a book for men.

Well, the great whirling tee-totum of life spun round, and one day it fell, spent, athwart a spot on the map marked “United States of America.” I packed up my bundle, and crossed the Atlantic; but with no more idea of visiting Hayama than I have, at this present writing, of going to Crim Tartary. I am not ashamed to confess that I had but a very dim notion indeed respecting the topographical relation in which New York stood towards the Island of Cuba. I think there must have been something wrong in the manner they taught boys geography in our time. It was too sectional; you were made to swallow Mercator’s projection in isolated scraps of puzzles; and if your eye wandered towards the Gulf of Mexico when it should have been intent on the Bay of Fundy, they boxed your ears. We used to learn all about the West Indies, and Wilberforce, and Clarkson, and Granville Sharpe, but no stress was laid on the fact that Cuba, and St. Domingo, and St. Thomas, were likewise West India Islands, and they were never mentioned in connexion with North America. I think Admiral Christopher Columbus, or the

Spanish Consilio de las Indias, must take some of the blame in this matter. What on earth made them call those American, or rather Columbian islands, Indian ones? I have never surmounted the early perplexity which beset me on the subject, and to this day it is to me incomprehensible why the passage from Halifax to Bermuda should be such a short and easy one; you ought to go round the Cape, surely, to the Indies.

Round again went the tee-totum, and the tip of its tiny staff pointed to the Southern Atlantic. "Havana" was inscribed on the uppermost facet. Again I packed my bundles, and, taking passage in a United States mail steamer, sped past Charleston, the which luckless city General Gillmore was then actively engaged in warming with Greek fire, and which Northern preachers were cheerfully and charitably comparing every Sunday to Sodom and Gomorrah. On the third day we were close on the Gulf Stream, and the usual feat of parlour or rather gangway magic was performed by a boatswain's mate, who lowered a bucket of water over the side, and bade us plunge our hands in. It was cold as ice. Twenty minutes afterwards he lowered the bucket again, drew up more water, and bade us dip. We did, and the water was tepid, almost warm. There was an increase of thirty degrees in temperature, and we were in that stream which an irate American politician once threatened to dam up and divert from the shores of England, thus leaving us "out in the cold," and freezing perfidious Albion to the glacial mean of Spitzbergen.

Threetimes—I do not understand the mysteries of navigation—we crossed the Gulf Stream. We skirted the coast of Florida so closely that we could see the pines that made a grim horizon to that swampy shore—so closely, that you might almost fancy you could see Secession in arms shaking its fists at the stars and stripes we carried. All this country was at the time to which I refer a land tabooed and accursed in Northern eyes. It was the coast of a rebellious state. Below St. Augustine's, half way between that and Key West, we saw the coral reefs and the Everglades. Coral reefs, I may observe, do not make so pretty a show on the coast of Florida as the material does, in the form of bracelets and earrings, in the jewellers' windows in Cockspur-street. In fact, a prudent ship-master keeps as far away from the coral reefs as he possibly can.

We should also have sighted Cape Florida Light and Carysfort Light; but the Confederates having carefully put the lights out, to favour blockade-running and perplex their enemies as far as they could, it was rather ticklish navigation after sunset. However, it is but a few days' voyage from New York to Cuba, and we had a tight ship and great confidence in our captain. Occasionally, when the look-out man signalled a sail, there was a slight exhibition of nervousness among the passengers. The loyal immediately assumed the stranger to be the Alabama—not yet

scuttled by the Kearsage off Cherbourg—and indulged in dire forebodings that within two hours the steamer's chronometers would be ticking in the cabin of Captain Raphael Semmes, C.S.A., the ship burnt or bonded, and themselves carried off to some port in the White Sea or the Indian Archipelago, thence to find their way to their destination as best they could. The disloyal, of whom I am afraid we had a considerable proportion among our passengers, generally jumped at the conclusion that the speck on the horizon, momentarily growing larger, was a Yankee gunboat specially detached from the blockading squadron to overhaul us. What sudden declarations there were of "whole hog" Union sentiments!—what dives into state-rooms, there presumably to make such little matters as revolvers, Confederate commissions, and rebel mail-bags, snug! The captain was a discreet man, Union to the backbone, but not inveterate against the opposite party. We had one passenger on board who, for all the privacy in which he kept, and the very large cloak in which he wrapped himself, was unmistakably, inside and out, Southern Greyback and Seash. To this gentleman in political difficulties I heard our worthy captain remark one morning, "My Christian friend, I'll tell you what it is. As soon as we get inside the Morro I should advise you to clear out of one of the starboard ports, and never stop running till we've got steam up again. The smell of Uncle Sam's mail-bags ain't good for you. It ain't indeed." The which, I take it, was very sensible, and at the same time very kind-hearted counsel.

All this time, while we were eating and drinking, and lounging and smoking, and dawdling over books and newspapers, and card-playing, and listening to the grand pianoforte in the saloon, which was exemplarily punished at least a dozen times a day by Mrs. Colonel Spankie and Miss Alexandra McStinger, lady passengers—and pretending that the time hung heavily on our hands, when, to tell the truth, sluggards as we were, we revelled in our laziness—there was going on all around us, and to a certain extent in our very selves, a curiously phenomenal process called Transformation. You have read poor Hawthorn's delicious book; you have read Faust, with an English crib; you have seen Lucas Cranach's picture of the Fontaine de Jouvence in the Berlin gallery? Well, we and our surroundings had become transformed. I had left New York in the middle of January, and in the rigidest throes of a Northern winter. The snow lay thick in the streets. They were skating on the lake in the central Park. There were midnight sleighing-parties on the Bloomingdale-road. The steamers on the North river had frozen fringes on the water-lines of their timbers, like the callous raggedness thrown out from the ends of a fractured bone; and you could see the very shapes of the ferry-boats' hulls cut out in the quickly parting ice that gathered about the landing-place. I had left Pier No. Seventy-seven, bottom of I forget which

street, swathed in furs and woollens, and shivering through all my wrappers. I heaped mountains of extraneous coverlets in my berth that night. It was not quite so cold next day. On the third it was positively mild. On the fourth morning, taking my ante-breakfast walk on deck, I remarked with astonishment that I was clad in a full suit of the very thinnest nankeen, and that I wore a very broad-brimmed straw hat. Nankeen white linen, or thin blue flannel, were the only wear among my fellow-passengers, and the ladies had become positive zephyrs. The smallest children on board testified very conclusively indeed, as to the weather having become warmer, by removing their apparel altogether, unless restrained by parents or nurses; and then I remembered that I had kicked off all the bedclothes during the night, and had had troubled dreams bearing on iced cider-cup. We had all become transformed. Where yesterday was a fire-shovel, to-day was a fan. We looked no more on a grey angry wintry ocean, but on a summer sea. It seemed ten years ago since there had been any winter; and yet it was only the day before yesterday.

For four-and-twenty hours did we sigh and swelter, and complain of the intolerable heat, and yet think it the most delightful thing in the world. We dined at four o'clock, as usual; but the purser, if he contracted for our meals, must have made rather a good thing of our repast that day. The first course was scarcely over, before seven-eighths of the diners rushed on deck to see the highlands of Cuba. Yonder, rather blue and indistinct as yet, was the Pan of Matanzas. That day we dined no more; but, there being a bar on deck, forward, with a New England bar-keeper of many virtues and accomplishments in his profession, many cheerful spirits adjourned to his little caboose, and, with steadfast and smiling conviviality of countenance, did liquor up on Bourbon and old Rye, till the Pan of Matanzas, to which we had come so close that it was clearly visible to the naked eye, must have been, to the convivialists, more indistinct than ever.

We were yet fifty miles from Havana; but by the help of strong opera-glasses, and lively conversation, and a glorious tropical sunset, they were the shortest two and a half score miles I ever knew, by land or sea. Coasting along the northern shore of Cuba from Matanzas westward, by high hills and white houses which, without any intervening beach or sand, came right down to the water's edge, like the castle-crowned vine-hills of the Rhine, we sighted, just before sundown, the Morro Castle itself: a great mass of dun-coloured rock, and tower, and battlement, and steep, of which the various parts seem to have grown into one another, like a rocky convent of the Sagra di San Michelo, so that you could scarcely tell which was castle and which crag. From its summit floats the flag of the Most Catholic Queen, blood-red and gold; and in front, and in the sea, like a tall grenadier on guard, stands the Morro Lighthouse. No Confeds have put *that* out. We pass between the

Morro and a promontory called the Punta, and can see a harbour, forested with masts, and a city all glancing and twinkling with light. We revel in thoughts of landing, of abandoning our keys to a commissionaire, and leaving the examination of our luggage until the morrow morning; of rushing to an hotel; of bathing, and supping, and going to the Tacon Theatre, or eating ices at La Dominica, after the band has done playing on the Plaza di Armas. Bless you, we know all about Havana by this time. I seem to have been familiar with the place for years. Did not Dagger and Bodkin and eke Carving-knife, tell me all about it? But the Captain of the Port of San Cristobal de la Habana is a great man—a very great man, under correction of the Capitan-General Dulce, be it spoken—and his laws are stringent. The sunset gun has been fired; the last notes of the warning trumpets have died away from the ramparts. We are just permitted to smuggle into the outer harbour; but there is no landing for us until six A.M., and under the guns of the Morro we are bound to remain all night. A very few years ago, even this privilege would not have been granted us, and we should have been forced to turn our heads seaward, and anchor in the roads.

It was tantalising, certainly; but still it was exceedingly pleasant, and no one felt inclined to grumble. It was something, at least, to know that the huge engines were at rest, and that we should hear their churning and grinding, their panting and trembling, no more, until, like poor Jack in Dibdin's song, we "went to sea again." So all the call was for coffee and cigars; and we idled about the deck, and speculated on what might be going on in the innumerable tenements in which the lights, now dim, now bright, were shining. Then out came the moon, like a great phantom of greenish white, and spread her arms right over the city of Havana. We could make out the hoary towers of the cathedral, and the church where is the tomb of CHRISTOPHER COLUMBOS; we could see the long slanting shadows cast by the beetling guns of the Morro on the rubbed walls. Boats came and went on the glassy waters of the harbour. There were lights in the port-holes of the ships too. What was going on *there*, I wonder? Skipper drinking cold rum-and-water. First officer playing a quiet rubber with the surgeon, the supercargo, and dummy. Purser making up his accounts; foremast men drinking sweethearts and wives, in the round-house. Everybody glad that the voyage is over, save, perhaps, that poor Northern lady in the captain's state-room, propped up with pillows, affectionately tended by that little band of Sisters of Charity who are going to New Orleans, and who is dying of consumption. Even she, perchance, is grateful that the restless engines no longer moan and labour, and that tomorrow she may land, and die in peace.

As "good nights" and "buenas noches" cross each other in the harbour, you begin to wish you could find a friend to take a second in "All's well." For the waning moon now deserts you,

and only the twinkling lights shine out from the black masses of buildings. The lights, too, are growing fewer, and ever since you came into port—which was at about eight o'clock—you have heard from time to time gusts of wild martial music from the shore. These gusts, the captain tells you, are the strains of the military bands playing in the Plaza di Armas. Hark! a most tremendous crash! then what a quaint yet plaintive flow of melody. Is that a Seguidilla, or a Cubano, or one of the hundred variations of the Jota Aragonese? Now, comes another crash; the cymbals have it clearly; the bassoons have given out; 'tis the big drum that is making all the running; the cymbals are nowhere; bah, it is a dead heat, and the grosso caiso and the plated dishes come in together. Now, the sounds have changed their direction. The soldiers are marching home to their barracks. Now, the wild sounds grow fainter; now, they die away altogether, and Havana is left to dulness and to me.

I walked the deck until long after the ship was wrapped in darkness—all save the illumined binnacles and my fellow deck-walkers' cigar-tips. It was not at all the kind of night for going to bed. It was, the rather, a night on which to stroll and stroll, and indulge in the deleterious habit of smoking, and wonder how many broadsides from the guns of the Morro it would take to blow you out of the water, and try to remember one of the movements of the Jota Aragonese, and at last, softly stealing into the saloon, and quite disdaining state-room berth, to fling yourself on a couch, and dream till morning of Mr. Alcachofado and the three young Creoles of Turnham-green.

Hasta Mañana. In my next I will relate something cogent as to what Mañana means in this part of the world.

HARD CASE OF THE WORKING BRUTES.

THE hard case of the working men at all times finds plenty of exponents to make it known through the length and breadth of the land; but I am not aware that any one has yet discerned, much less expounded, the hard case of the working brutes. I am about to supply the omission.

I hold my brief from a cab-horse, which pulled me through the snow the other day. As I was paying his master, an extortionate dog—the animal turned round and looked at me, and, at a single glance, I saw the whole of the hard case in his melancholy eye. It was not for himself alone that he appealed with that sad but expressive look; he spoke also for his fellow-labouring brutes, the cow, the donkey, the sheep, and the pig, and for those foreign brethren of his, the elephant and the camel.

He did not complain of individual wrongs (which might be exceptional), but of the inevitable lot to which he and all his hard-working tribe were decreed, not so much by the

design of nature, as by the insensibility of mankind. I think I understand him clearly.

He has no objection to work for a reasonable number of hours every day; he thinks it right that he should have to labour for his living, and does not, like his master, man, regard the necessity as a curse. Such a thought never entered his head. He will not even complain that other brutes, such as the dog, the cat, the parrot, and the canary-bird, are exempt from useful exertion, while he is obliged to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow and his whole body; though that circumstance might very fairly be urged as an aggravation of his wrongs. What he does complain of is, that he is rarely allowed to see any pleasure, and never, on any occasion, gets luxuries.

Here is the key to the whole matter. Day after day it is corn and hay, hay and corn—no other variety, no little made dishes, no dessert, no sparkling wine, no choice cigars. Then when he has done his work we tie him up in his stall and keep him there until we want him to go to work again. All work and no play for the poor horse—no going out in the evening to relieve his overtaxed energies with a play or a concert, or an harmonic supper. No luxuries, no amusements whatever. Putting the case to me with that appealing look, the working horse says: "How would *you* like it? at work all day in the City; beef and mutton, mutton and beef from one week's end to another; and to bed every night the moment you have swallowed your supper. Oh, but you are an intelligent animal, you say. Am not I an intelligent animal? You yourself are constantly speaking about the sagacity of the horse, and when you want to sell me you call me 'clever.' You are quite right, I am clever. Perhaps there is not such a very great difference between us in that respect, after all. I can carry burdens, I can go errands, I can run, leap, and dance, and I understand what is said to me. It appears to me that I only fall short of you in not being able to speak and read and write. But these are accomplishments which have nothing to do with animal enjoyments. I have a palate, I have taste—why do you suppose that I cannot enjoy a *pâte de foie gras*, that I do not appreciate a glass of old port, that I take no delight in a sensation drama? You say I am talking nonsense. Well, put it this way. Are there no horse equivalents for these human luxuries and amusements? Look at other brutes, which are merely ornamental, while I am useful. There is your canary-bird, you give him sugar; your pet dog, you treat him to cakes and give him cream to lap—nay, I have heard of a dog having roast chicken for dinner; your parrot, to whom you allow the double luxury of indulging in nuts and bad language; your cat, who is permitted to hunt mice and repose after the chase on the drawing-room sofa. You allow all these brutes luxuries and pleasures, but you deny them to me."

It must be admitted that this argument of

the horse is cogent. One can readily see how it might be urged on their own behalf by the cow, the donkey, the camel, and the elephant. Perhaps not so cogently by the last-mentioned animal, for somehow or other man has made a pet of him, and the more he is petted and the less he has to do, the better he is treated. When he works hard in his native country, or in any of those countries where he is employed as a beast of burden, he gets nothing but his food and water; but when he becomes an ornamental animal, with nothing to do, he is treated to apples, oranges, and biscuits. It is the way of the world. The useless classes are always the most pampered. I don't know about the camel. I believe he does not care about apples, oranges, and biscuits; but still there may be something which he does care about. How do we know that he is not passionately fond of pine-apples, and a "drop of something" in his water?

We do not take much pains to consult the tastes of our best friends. The fawning sycophantic favourite always gets the best of it. The horse says: "Look at the dog, the cat, the canary, and the parrot, and compare their condition and privileges with those of the working brutes." Let us look at them. I will take the instance of my dog Tiny. I will not call him a pampered menial, but a bloated aristocrat. He is an idle dog, utterly useless; never does anything but mischief, never hunted anything in his life but some defenceless chickens, never caught anything but the distemper, never barks at strangers except in the daytime. Yet I lavish every sort of kindness upon this dog as if he were the most useful creature in my establishment. He is present at every meal, and gets tit-bits at every chair; he has chicken-bones afterwards on a china plate; he is washed and combed; he is petted, and made much of; he is allowed to lie on the best cushions and the daintiest rugs; he is taken out for walks and into society, where, with impunity, he generally misbehaves himself in one way or other. Look at the luxuries which that dog enjoys. He has butter to his bread, lumps of sugar, tea and cake with it, wine of Oporto—he acquired the taste during his indisposition, and it has grown upon him, so that he makes a beast (no, a human being) of himself whenever he gets the chance. In one respect that dog is more fortunate than his master. He goes into the very highest society, and is received there with open arms. I have seen him confabulating with a duke's dog on terms of the closest familiarity, when I, his master, dared not go up and speak to the duke.

Then, again, there is my canary-bird. Not only is it a regulation of the establishment that he shall have fresh seed and water every morning, but he has lumps of sugar and dainty bits of green meat thrust between the bars of his cage. His house is swept out every day, and his floor carefully sanded; if he shows the slightest symptoms of indisposition, his drink is medicinally impregnated with saffron or the

oxide of iron. He is a privileged person, and he knows it; he flies down upon the breakfast-table and helps himself, and, turning up his beak at crumbs, shows a pampered preference for sugar. And what return does he make for all this? Sings morning, noon, and night, until his master is almost deafened with his noise.

The Cat. Petted and pampered too. His partiality for fish is indulged on every convenient occasion. Too idle to catch mice, the mice are caught for him, and he makes an easy prey of them as they run out of the mouth of the trap. He takes his sport like a bloated aristocrat as he is; has his game driven up by beaters to his very feet, in a battue. Every night that cat goes out upon the spree and comes home Heaven knows at what hour in the morning!

My half-dozen of bantams have everything their own way. I have given over the garden to them. They are lords and ladies of all they survey there. I cannot have flowers. I cannot have vegetables. To humour my bantams, I must have nothing but gravel, worms, and insects. If I do not go down every morning and feed them upon the very best shelled wheat, they march into the house and peck at my legs. When the snow came on the other day, they left their house, as not being comfortable enough for them, and insisted upon roosting on the backs of my best mahogany chairs, in the dining-room. The noise they make when any female member of the community lays a ridiculous egg, is dreadful. If I go out and beat them they only make more noise; and the moment my back is turned, the cocks all set up crowing in token that they have got the best of me. They are the artfullest cocks and hens I ever knew. They are aware that I am flattered by their flying up on the window-sill and rapping with their beaks on the glass to call my attention when I am busy writing, and they do it on all occasions, their reward being some chopped meat—they have no objection to their own species—or a handful of canary-seed, which they consider a dainty. I even indulge those fowls with black-beetles, which I take much trouble to catch for them with elaborate snares in the back kitchen. What thought and cruel ingenuity do I exercise on behalf of those bantams! I pour some double stout into a deep basin, I place the basin in the back kitchen, I fix a little wooden ladder to the side of the earthenware wall, and then I enshroud the back kitchen in Cimmerian darkness. The beetles, lurking in their holes, smell the double stout (which they instinctively know to be Barclay and Perkins's best), creep cautiously out, ascend the ladders, and reaching the giddy top of the wall, make a false step, and fall into the seductive but treacherous abyss. But they are not drowned. Such is the refined cruelty of man, that he only puts enough double stout into the abyss to tempt his innocent victims to besottedness. When they recover from the stunning effects of their fall, they think they are in the

beetles' heaven, feeding upon the ambrosia of their gods. They wallow in their plentiful cups, and sing roaring songs about beetle love and double stout (they call it "rosy wine," of course), and think it will be ever thus. But artful and cruel man appears in the morning letting in the reflective light, and the unhappy beetles know that they have been deceived. They cry "Ha! betrayed!" and make a rush to scramble up the wall, but are so drunk that they all tumble down again. And their fate is to be eaten alive and in a state of intoxication by those bloated bantams! Never did Roman emperor enjoy such wild, ruthless, extravagant, luxurious saturnalia as those fowls.

All this time my horse is in his stable, my cow is in her shed, leading the dulllest and most monotonous of lives, getting no luxuries, seeing no pleasure, but toiling or yielding day after day for bare food. I don't think I have visited my horse in his stable (to see that he is comfortable) half a dozen times in as many years. I don't remember treating him to any luxury, except a few handfuls of clover, and I did not let him have much of that, for fear that he should be "blown," which would, of course, have unfitted him for dragging me about town. Whether the groom gives him sufficient food or not, whether he has water when he requires it, or if he is whipped or beaten when he is naturally restive or uneasy, I do not know, and I never care to inquire. It is enough for me that he is at the door when I want him to do my work. Yet I am not insensible to his claims upon my consideration. I never over-drive him; I am careful not to keep him standing in the wet or the cold; I never use the whip to him, except in the gentlest manner. Indeed, in this respect, I am exceedingly tender-hearted. I cannot bear to see a horse beaten, and would rather miss a train or an appointment any day than that my horse—were it a cab hack that I had never seen before—should be urged along with blows. With all this consideration for the animal, I give him over to the tender mercies of a groom, and in the hours when he should be well fed and carefully tended, I leave him to his fate. Yet I believe that a horse can appreciate attentions from his master, that he likes to be patted, and spoken to with kind words; that it is a pleasure to him to receive food from his master's hand; that he considers a biscuit or a bit of bread a great treat. But these attentions are lavished upon those unproductive animals, the dog, the cat, and the pet bird. The hard-working horse, like the hard-working man, gets none of them.

The case of that gracious animal the cow is even more pitiable. If a civilised people were to lapse into the worship of animals, the cow would certainly be their chief goddess. What a fountain of blessing is a cow. She is the mother of beef, the source of butter, the original cause of cheese—to say nothing of horn spoons, hair combs, and upper leathers. A gentle, amiable, ever-yielding creature, who has no joy in her family affairs which she does not share

with man. We rob her of her children that we may rob her of her milk, and we only care for her that the robbery may be perpetuated. How little do we Londoners think of these patient, devoted animals—to which we owe so many necessities and comforts—tied up by the neck in close, foul, stiving sheds, feeding upon hard, dry food, and never seeing the green fields, or breathing pure country air, from one year's end to another! How little do their owners think of them, or care for them, until some epidemic disease appears among them! Then, and not till then, is our solicitude awakened—not, however, for the ill-used, long-suffering cow, but for our own selfish selves.

Perhaps if we were to pet our useful, hard-working animals more, we should be more worthy of the name of a humane people, and find it both to our credit and our advantage.

REAL BRIGANDS.

THE poetic brigand of noble impulses and elevated intellect, who has been driven to a lawless life by the oppression of man, and who is merely a hero turned the wrong side out—that mysterious and glorious creature who sits on a rock talking to himself, and apostrophising the moon, his mother, and the distant sheep-bells below, while confiding Medora or devoted Gulnare watches for his coming or waits on his moods—that courtly gentleman of the green-wood, who is brave to his foes, generous to the vanquished, and chivalrous to woman, is doubtless a very fascinating personage, especially to the young; but the real brigand, seen as he is, and not through the softening haze of romance, is a different creature. A greedy truculent half-starved coward, whose life is one of perpetual fear, who shivers with terror if the troops be within hail, and whose greatest exploits are performed by overwhelming numbers against defenceless passers-by—a mean thief stealing shirts and stockings, and bits of stale bread from a helpless captive—a savage, now gorging himself with meat, and now fainting for want of food—inexpressibly dirty and shabby—brutal to the woman who has temporarily united herself to him—alternately the tyrant and the victim, the extortioner and the prey of the peasant—the bandit, as MR. MOENS* found and has described him, is about as repulsive a ruffian as one would wish not to see anywhere; the brigand of romance and reality having no more resemblance to each other than Voltaire's Huron has to the stamping grunting rascal who quails before a "medicine-man" with a bladder rattle, but who takes the scalp of a fallen enemy as his version of "Who's afraid?"

There never was a book which took all the romance out of a thing more completely than this dashing and unaffected narrative of the English traveller who went down to Paestum,

* English Travellers and Italian Bandits. By W. J. C. Moens.

and fell among thieves by the way. From the first page to the last there is not a single trait of heroism to enliven the prosaic brutality of the men. Nothing but hardship, selfishness, and fear. Like the savage, whose mode of living he affects, the brigand's whole existence is one of suspicion and terror. He is afraid of everything—of sickness, of death, of the peasants, of the soldiers, of his kinsfolk, of his wife. At every turn some peril, beyond the usual peril of human life, meets him face to face; and familiarity, far from producing contempt of danger, only serves to sharpen his faculties in the perception of it, and to keep his fears for ever alive. Even in the ordinary danger of their trade they are cowards. When the soldiers were once close to some of them, "Pavoni's teeth were all chattering, and he was as white as a sheet; Scope was the same, and lying on the ground; and Antonio was in such a state of fear and shaking, that he kept striking his gun against the rocky sides of the cave, and making a great noise, to the dismay of all. I sat down on a stone, and, to reassure them, said, 'Courage, courage; eat a little;' and, to set the example, took some bread and meat out of my pocket, and began eating it. My doing so enraged them to a great extent, and they said, 'What a fool you are to begin to eat when you will be dead in two minutes!'"

Indeed, the self-possession of this Englishman, and his contempt of death and danger, stand out at all times in startling contrast to their incessant fear; and this, together with his quickness of observation, his power of enduring fatigue, his cool good temper, and his "cleverness" of hand and eye, gave him a certain hold on their esteem and rough good-fellowship, which probably saved him from many a torture. For he was not ill treated on the whole. The band itself fared ill. Hunted by the soldiers into a strange country where they were not sure of the peasantry, by whose connivance alone they exist; without shelter at all times; often without food; living like wild beasts driven from lair to lair, they had but a bad time of it. Except in the thievings and ill humour of two worthies, Pepino and Scope, the Englishman shared the fortunes of the rest pretty equally. There was always the great difference of state which could not be got over—that he was a prisoner, and had to be watched and guarded, and hidden out of sight (which was not always easy, seeing that he was the tallest of the band, and towered a head and shoulders above any of them), while they were "companions," with guns, money, wives, and a certain amount of freedom, always stopping short of the liberty to escape, or to betray their comrades.

The five *brigandesses*, with their short cut hair, and dressed like the men, looked so like boys, that it was some time before Mr. Moens found out they were women. They were not a very fascinating quintette of womanhood, though not the bloodthirsty creatures they are often depicted; being just a group of strong-limbed

active coarse-minded young women, able to bear an immense amount of privation and fatigue, but in no way remarkable for devotion, heroism, melancholy, or any other form of tragic sentiment. One girl though, poor Concetta, the chattel of Cicco Guange, showed immense courage and a kind of Red Indian stolidity of endurance, when her arm was broken by an accidental shot from one of the band. She bore the pain without flinching, not uttering a sound of complaint, but merely clenching her teeth together, and hissing through them when they were dressing her wound with a pair of scissors. And even when gangrene set in, and she was compelled to come down into the plains and give herself up to the authorities, and her arm was amputated, "she had so much nerve that she refused chloroform, and neither groaned nor complained. The only sign she gave of suffering was clenching her teeth. When the surgeons left her, she said, 'Remember, I had eighteen napoleons about me when I came here; I must have them again when I am well.'"

Two of the five women belonging to Manzo's band carried guns, the other three revolvers. Their chief office seemed to be, to mend rent clothing, and to hem batches of new handkerchiefs, when they could get them—a gaily coloured handkerchief being the brigand's gala dress; but for all womanly work of cooking, washing, baking, or the like, they were absolutely useless. The men were generally both butchers and cooks, when they managed to either steal or buy a sheep or a goat, while the peasants do all the rest—and at a rather larger profit than they could get by dealing with honest folk.

"All the time I was in their hands," says Mr. Moens, "I used to inquire the prices of various articles of food in the towns, and got a very accurate idea of what the brigands paid for them; a pezzo, their term for a ducat, equal to three shillings and fourpence, was the peasants' ordinary price for a loaf weighing two rotoli (equal to about three and a half pounds English); this costs from threepence to sixpence in the towns, according to whether it was made of rye, maize, or wheat, but it made no difference in the price paid by the brigands. A coarse cotton shirt cost them two and a half ducats, or eight shillings and fourpence; and washing one, a ducat, or three shillings and fourpence; each cartridge for a revolver cost the same, and everything else in proportion. From a calculation I made when with them, I do not think that a band consisting of from twenty-five to thirty men would spend less than four thousand pounds a year for absolute necessities, and the rest of their spoils would be lent out among their friends in the country at ten per cent interest. I recommended them to try Italian five per cent stock, as being safer than lending money on personal security. But they said they never lost any, and they feared the stock being confiscated by government."

Thus, the peasant is the great supporter and the great gainer by brigandage; though on the

other hand it may be said that the risk he runs in carrying on any correspondence with the brigands renders it absolutely necessary that he should be well paid to make it worth his while. Indeed, between the authorities on the one side, with fine and imprisonment, or even death, as the punishment for collusion with the brigands—and the brigands on the other; with a vendetta carried out to the last extreme should any information be given to the authorities, and irreparable damage done to standing crops, to whole villages, and to individuals should there be persistent refusal to forward supplies—the poor peasant has a difficult time of it. Very wary walking between his two hard task-masters is necessary to keep his place in life.

Then, the brigands are generally old comrades and countrymen; with numberless small ties of friendship, relationship, and old association among the peasants—themselves, for the most part, brigands undeveloped. An unlucky thrust with the stiletto has made the one, and the same cause would make the other; public opinion in the plains and villages not bearing hardly on the “companions,” but very much the reverse; high payment, defiance of the law, a picturesque uniform when clean and gay, and the repute of deeds of daring (never mind the actual cowardice), being generally sufficient to enlist popular sympathy for any body of men extant.

But, after all, the peasants are really as criminal as the brigands themselves, for it is from them and the vetturini that these gentlemen gain their knowledge of the goings and comings of rich travellers—foreign and home-bred—and that if there were no such scouts and spies among the unsuspected, the career of the real criminals would soon be brought to a stand-still. Information to begin with, and food to follow—with the reward of enormous prices for all they do—the peasants are the mainstays and supports of brigandage, and against them as the tap root should the vigilance and the vengeance of government be directed.

Mr. Moens says but little concerning the presumed political connexion between the brigands and Rome, and the ex-king. Certainly no part of his ransom, he believes, went either to Rome, or to any part of the province of Salerno. He saw it himself paid and distributed, each man present at the time of the capture getting his share, and a certain per-centage kept back for the general expenses of the band. But he was told by them that Apulia was the headquarters of brigandage, and that there they had a general named Crocco, who they said was in communication with Rome. He asked how many men this Crocco had under him, and was answered, “A thousand men and many captains, as well as six hundred men in the Basilicata.” They also told him that, in 1861, Spanish generals came to lead those fighting for Francis the Second against Victor Emmanuel, and that one of them named Borjès had an enormous black beard, which they said he always held in his left hand when he

drank milk, of which he was very fond. Their sympathies go decidedly with Bomba, in preference to Il Rè Galantuomo; for once when the conversation was becoming dangerously personal concerning Mr. Moens’s ears, and “his beard with his chin attached,” to turn the subject he asked Manzo, the captain, what they would do with Victor Emmanuel if they caught him? “They all chuckled at such an idea, and Manzo declared that he would have ten millions of ducats and *then kill him*. To Francis the Second, if they caught him, they said they would give a good dinner and then release him.”

One of the most curious things in this account is to trace the gradual hardening of the system, and the elimination of all British-bred fastidiousness, as the unfortunate captive became more and more familiar with hardship. The day after their capture, Mr. Aynsley and Mr. Moens were offered a little piece of hard sausage called *supersato*; but after discussing its digestible qualities they gave it back, telling the brigands that it would not agree with them. They laughed, and the captain said, “They will like it by-and-by:” which truly came to pass. Mr. Moens never heard the last of this. It must have seemed strange to men who are thankful for a handful of Indian corn daily, who rejoice over a tough sheep or a lean and scraggy goat, and to whose palates anything that will keep body and soul together comes as acceptable food, if not as delicious luxury. A bit of *supersato* was a luxury to the brigands; and when their prisoners declined it, they felt much as we should feel if a pauper declined roast beef and plum-pudding on the plea of indigestibility. As time went on, and starvation became a daily companion, nature broke up the pretty mosaic work of civilisation and the culinary art; and raw onions, raw cabbage, dry hard bread only too dry to be mouldy, a bone of half raw meat, garlic, entrails, and even the rancid grease used for greasing their boots, all these things passed the ordeal of English taste, and were welcomed as means whereby to live. It is strange how quickly even the most highly civilised man resolves into the savage again when fairly under the harrow.

As a rule, Mr. Moens was treated tolerably well by the brigands, as has been said; but he had two tormentors, Pepino and Scope, and when left under their charge, fared ill enough. Manzo was the captain of the whole force, and was a bandit of somewhat more likeness to the popular ideal than the rest. He was handsome, fairly good tempered, prompt, and, in his own way, generous; always kind to his captives when not half maddened by disappointments respecting the arrival of the money, when there would be highly unpleasant scenes, and threats of ears and head, and the like, which did not tend to reassure the Englishman; though he generally answered, “As you please,” and took the thing with perfect coolness. Manzo was not a man to be trifled with, either by his prisoners or his men. Indeed, from his men he

exacted an obedience that left no question of a divided command.

One day "Guange, who had been a soldier in the Italian army, and who had become a brigand merely for having been away from his regiment one day without leave, was having an altercation with one of his comrades, and, like these people, wished to have the last word. Manzo told him to be quiet, and just because he did not obey at once, he rushed at him, knocked him down, and kept hitting him and rubbing his face on the stones. Still Guange would not be quiet, until Manzo had pounded his face into a jelly, it being quite bruised, and bleeding freely. Even his gums were cut badly from the grinding against the ground. Manzo looked a perfect demon when excited; he curled up his lips, and showed all his teeth, and roared at his victim, jerking out his words. The implicit obedience generally shown to him by the members of his band was extraordinary. They loved him on account of his unselfishness as regards food, he being always willing to give away his own share, and they feared him because he had shown on one or two occasions that he did not scruple to shoot any of them on the spot if they refused to obey orders."

When the "order of release" came for the prisoner in the shape of the last instalment of ransom, Manzo sent round the hat, in order that Mr. Moens should "go to Naples like a gentleman," and made up a sum of seventeen and a half napoleons, besides rings and other keepsakes. But this was not a very large percentage on a ransom of thirty thousand ducats; and the Englishman took all he could get, and asked for more, getting some things he wanted, but not others. He got Generoso's ring and knife—the knife that had already taken the lives of two men—giving in exchange the small pen-knife with which he had whittled out a spoon, and carved a cross, and made many other little matters, to the intense admiration and amazement of the brigands; but he just missed by an accident a very thick and long gold chain, for which he asked Manzo, and which he would have had, but that the gentleman was called away while he was taking it off to present to him. He got five rings in all, which Manzo's mother made him show two peasants after he was free; and which she evidently considered reflected great dignity on her as the mother of one who had shown such princely generosity.

But if times were more tolerable when Manzo was with his band, they were very intolerable when Mr. Moens was left with only a guard, while the captain was off, either on a foraging expedition, or looking after those eternal instalments which, though paid, could not be "lifted" because of the soldiery. When with Pepino's band especially, things went hard with him. As they were to have no share in his expected ransom, they looked upon him as a nuisance, and grudged every morsel of food they were obliged to give him. Pepino stole his drinking-cup, his capuce or hood, in fact all he could lay his hands on; and they half starved him; making a point of speaking to him with the utmost brutality,

and constantly threatening his life with their pistols, guns, and knives. One great game in which they indulged, was thrusting their knives quickly between his body and his arms. Their captive says, "I never allowed myself to show the slightest fear, and always told them that it was nothing to die, it was soon over, and that the next world was far better. They all have the most abject fear of death, and I always tried to impress them with the idea that Englishmen never fear to die, and that, if they wished it, they were perfectly welcome to take my life, as it would save me and my friends so much trouble. I felt sure that in a short time they would discontinue trying to frighten me, when they found out that I only laughed at their attempts, and ridiculed them for their fear of death."

It was the only thing to make them respect him, though another time it was a chance whether the English spirit would lead to good or evil for him. They were going up a very steep ascent, when Generoso, who was immediately behind Mr. Moens, "kept hitting and poking me with the barrel of his gun, because I did not ascend as quickly as he wished, though I was close behind the man before me. At last I turned round in a pretended rage, and with my stick in both hands, raised it over his head. He shrank back and brought his gun up to his shoulder with an oath. Two or three ran up. I caught hold of him, but at the same time they abused me, and seemed quite taken aback at the idea of a ricattato threatening one of themselves. I told them I walked as well as they did, and I would not be bullied, so it was no use attempting it—that they might kill me if they wished, and the sooner the better. I found this answer capitally, and I was never touched again while on the march, and it was from this moment that they began to respect me a little for my apparent disregard of death; and when we arrived at the camp-fire, it was immediately narrated how I had threatened to kill a *companion*, this being the term they always use when speaking of each other."

These camp-fires on the mountains are the really picturesque circumstance of a brigand's life, and when lying round them the only time when he is picturesque; for his uniform, which looks well enough when new, soon gets torn and dirty, and incomplete—this article being left behind in a sudden flight—that article falling as a legacy to an accommodating peasant who has taken it to wash or to repair, and on whose hands the unexpected appearance of troops finally throws the dangerous treasures—while, as for the gay foppery of rings and chains and coloured scarves and kerchiefs, and all the rest of the stock adornments, they exist certainly, but they appear only on rare festal days, when the times are considered safe, and finery and jollity not out of season. But these times are very rare; the main object of a brigand's life being to procure food, either by "tithes in kind," levied in unfriendly districts, or by exchange and barter when the peasants are of a more commercial and obliging frame of mind, or as future ransom-money in the shape of defenceless wayfarers with families who

respect their ears, and would rather not have their heads sent to them in a paper parcel, while their bodies feed the wolves on the mountains. But round the fires at night—then Salvator Rosa lives again, and the brigand of the drama and the studio is in some sense realised. Swarthy men lying in every attitude round the blazing pile, their guns in their hands, their dark faces gleaming in the light, while hooded sentinels watch silently under the shadow of the rocks and through the long vista of the darkened trees, overhead the sky glittering with stars, and the old mountain echoes ringing to the sound of song and laughter; seen, just as a picture, the thing is well enough, and full of admirable material for artists and the like; but that is all. Any group of men, from soldiers to settlers, bivouacking in the open air, affords the same combination of light and line; and one need not go to melodramatic thieves even for studies after Salvator Rosa.

The dresses of the two bands, Manzo's and Pepino Cerino's, were sensible and wise-like enough, and with far more simplicity and less finery than is the current notion of a brigand's wardrobe. Manzo's men had long jackets, of stout brown cloth the colour of withered leaves, with a most useful and generous arrangement of pockets: one pocket especially in the back being not unlike a pantomime clown's. Mr. Moens has seen a pair of trousers, two shirts, three or four pounds of bread, a bit of dirty bacon, cheese, and other things, brought out thence, one by one, when a search was made for any missing article; in fact, it is the sac, or hand-bag of modern days sewed inside the coat, and not carried outside. The waistcoats, of dark blue cloth, were buttoned at the side, but had showy gilt buttons down the centre, and they, too, had an arrangement of pockets of great use; for in the lower were kept spare cartridges, balls, gunpowder, knives, &c., while above went the watch in one, and percussion caps in the other. The trousers were of dark blue cloth like the waistcoat, and were cut like other men's trousers. Cerino's band were in dark blue coats and trousers, with bright green waistcoats adorned with small silver buttons; and they all had belts for cartridges, &c., and all had hoods attached by a button to their jackets, which, however, were often lost in the woods, and always at a premium when retained. They had wide-awakes; and one which Manzo gave to Mr. Moens as being rather more sightly than his own, had inside it the label of Christy of Graecchurch-street, who happened to be the Englishman's own hatter when at home.

But the blessing of blessings to the brigands in the way of clothing, is the capote, the large-hooded cloak worn in Italy by peasants, and familiar to all who have travelled on the Continent, as a general article of dress everywhere, with certain slight modifications of cut. Manzo gave Mr. Moens one of these capotes, but as time went on, and these and other things became scarcer, he had to share it at night with Pavone, one of the band, who had a habit of snoring, and who was not quite as fragrant as a bottle of eau-

de-Cologne. When the poor captive was ill, as he was once—so ill that he thought they would have "to dig a shallow hole to put his body in," he gave Pavone an uncomfortable night by "hitting him to stop his snoring, rolling myself round, and so dragging the covering from him, and groaning from the pain I suffered; but I must say for all that he was most forbearing." This bad fit of illness (diarrhoea) was cured by some cheese made of cow's milk. Lorenzo, another brigand, cured himself of fever by drinking a good-sized bottle of castor oil at one pull, and about ninety times as much quinine as would lie on a franc. This somewhat heroic remedy cut down in a day, a fever which had lasted a fortnight.

One of the causes which lengthened the captivity of Mr. Moens, was the belief of the brigands that he was a highly influential personage, related to Lord Palmerston, and of such importance that the Italian government would pay his ransom, whatever the amount asked. Wherefore, they fixed it originally at a hundred thousand ducats for himself and Mr. Aynsley, equal to seventeen thousand pounds; then after a few minutes' conversation with Sentonio, "a tall clumsy ruffian with black eyes, hair, and beard," it was reduced to half, namely, fifty thousand ducats; but finally they accepted thirty thousand, which was a considerable reduction from the first demand. Many and great were the difficulties, not about raising the sum, but about transmitting it. The laws against paying ransom to the brigands, or trafficking with them in any way, are very severe; and as the capture of an English milord, a relation of Lord Palmerston, and the friend of the Italian government, had created immense excitement, the whole country was scourged by soldiery, to the imminent risk of the poor captive's life, when they came to shots with the brigands. For, as he says, they always seemed to take special aim at him, as he was the tallest of the party; and he was thus in even more than equal danger with the rest, of a bullet through the heart. Their activity added to the prolongation of his captivity; for the brigands would not let him go without the money, and the money could not be brought up to the band; and so the whole thing was a game at cross-purposes and checked intentions, and an immense amount of suffering, mental and physical.

It was a tremendous moment for both Mr. Moens and his then fellow-captive, Mr. Aynsley, when they drew lots as to which should be set free to go and raise the ransom. Mr. Moens held the pieces of wood which were to decide the lots, and Mr. Aynsley drew. When he drew the fortunate longer one of the two, "I must confess I felt as if I had been drawing for my life and I had lost," says Mr. Moens. A minute afterwards, the report of a gun—the bullet whizzing over the prisoner's head—told the band that the soldiers were upon them. Mr. Aynsley had met them, almost immediately after leaving the brigands, and they started in hot pursuit. No good was done; no good ever was done by the soldiers; only poor Mr. Moens slipped and

fell in the general flight, nearly broke his arm, nearly got drowned, and was nearly shot; but finally escaped all these close chances to which his would-be rescuers subjected him, thanking God for his safety, but "feeling anything but charitably disposed towards the rulers who ought years ago to have cleared their country from these ruffians, instead of leaving them alone till they carried off an Englishman."

He never had any very good chance of escape save once; when, if he would have shot two sleeping men, and one other awake and at a distance, he might perhaps have got away. Scope was the one at a distance, he having moved away two or three yards from his gun in order to get into the sun while he was freeing his shirt of vermin. For, the brigands, who rarely change their clothes, and never wash themselves, are, as might be expected, overrun with vermin to a most disgusting extent. Mr. Moens was inside a cave. Sentonio and Pavone had laid their carcasses across the entrance, and Scope, as was said, had moved off to a little distance. Two guns, one single, the other double-barrelled, lay within reach of his arm; he might seize one and kill the two sleeping men, and Scope too, if he threatened to move. It was a temptation, and he pondered over it—but his mind and heart revolted from a double, perhaps triple murder; his life was in no immediate danger; he fully believed that the ransom would be finally all settled; and, to turn away his thoughts, he opened the little book of Psalms he had with him, when his eye fell upon the passage, "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O Lord!" The words spoke home; he resolutely put the temptation behind him, amused himself with picking out the grains of wheat and rye from some ears he had plucked, and then a herd of cattle passing near, woke the sleepers, and destroyed his only available chance of escape.

This same Pavone was a double murderer; for the first crime he had been imprisoned three years; but, repeating the amiable weakness, he had been afraid to face the authorities, and so took to the woods. His wife and children were in prison, that being the practice of the Italian government concerning the families of brigands. He would have given himself up to release them, but that he was afraid of Manzo's vengeance against members of his family, all of whom would be murdered on the first opportunity if he had deserted. Else it is not an uncommon thing for the minor members of a band to give themselves up when they have amassed a certain sum of money, whereby they can be well fed while in prison for their term. This they call "retiring from business;" and a very pleasant and profitable retiring it is.

Great care was taken that Mr. Moens should never see any of the peasants who came up to transact their small business with the brigands. It was a matter of indifference whether they saw him or not, but he was not to see them, so that he might not be able to recognise and thus bear wit-

ness against them, to the result of twenty years' imprisonment for them if detected. He had to sit out of the way, pull his capote over his face, lie on his back, go through all sorts of voluntary methods of blindness, when the bread, and the meat, and the ciceri (a curious kind of pea, only one in a pod, and the name of which every one was obliged to pronounce on the night of the Sicilian vespers, when those who did not give it the full Sicilian accent were set down as French and killed), the milk, and the washing, and the rosolio came up, and money was chinked out, and the band kept from starving, for that day at least. It was the one point of honour, also of common-sense precaution, with the brigands.

Gambling is the favourite brigand amusement; and they gamble, as they do all things, to excess. Manzo lost seventy napoleons at one toss; and the private shares of ransom-moneys change hands twenty times before finally dispersed and disbursed in the plains. They wished Mr. Moens to play with them, but he, shrewdly suspecting that it would be a case of "heads I win, tails you lose," tried the experiment with confetti. They lost, and laughed in his face when he asked them to pay up. On which he took the hint, and declined the heavier stakes. The day when the last of his ransom was paid, there was great gambling going on, and in a short time the money was nearly all in the hands of four men—the captain, Generoso, Andrea, and Pasquale.

On the whole, now that the danger is past, the money gone, and no real damage done to any one, it is an experience scarcely to be much regretted. The ears of Mr. Moens were saved, his limbs were saved, his life was saved; and for the "compliment" of a few thousands, he has had an experience and an adventure, of startling magnitude in these prosaic times of ours. He has seen what no other Englishman of the time has seen, and has done what no one else has done, and has written a bright and charming book as the result; with one piece of advice as the moral, very patent to the reader—namely, do not travel with much luggage, whether consisting of photographic plates or not, and do not travel in brigand-haunted places at all, with luggage or without. The heavy baggage was in part the cause of the Englishman's disaster. Continentals do not understand our love of work and turmoil, and the only facts that seem to have at all shaken the belief of the brigands that they had captured a milord, were the blackened state of his hands from his manipulation of photographic chemicals, and his flannel trousers—like those which Italian prisoners wear. But they got over these two shocks, pursued the even tenor of their faith, stuck to their text, and did not abate in their demands until the very last.

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